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MEGATRON
UNDER CONSTRUCTION
A TRANSFEM
MEGATRON ZINE
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

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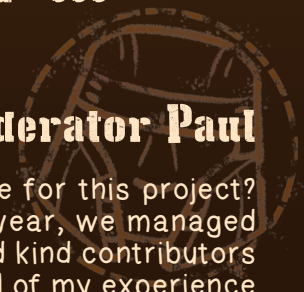
| tfemmegatronzine

MEGATRON
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

A TRANSFEM MEGATRON ZINE

A MESSAGE ...



Moderator Paul

Where do I even START with my gratitude for this project? Being a fan of Transformers for only just a year, we managed to collect a group of passionate, talented, and kind contributors to make this passion project a reality. With all of my experience in moderating fanzines, this has to be one of my favorites by far. What I first thought was an extremely niche idea within the fandom brought together a small community who all shared the same love: transfeminine Megatron. I've even met now-close friends through this project! I wouldn't have wanted this project to turn out any differently. Thank you!!

Let this project be a reminder to everyone, contributors and readers (like you!) alike. No matter the climate of the world we live in, no matter the opinions of others in our lives, being transgender is something to be celebrated. Even if we are not safe to do so publicly, know there is always a place to cherish our peers. Do not conform to what others see us as! We exist, we are strong, and we will not let others silence our presence. RISE UP!

Please enjoy over 80 pages of art and writing, over 25 contributor's works, and over hundreds of hours of love given to our beautiful girl, MEGATRON!

THANK YOU!

Moderator Puzzles

This was my first time modding a zine ever! I was only emboldened to do so to help out my best friend at first, but my love of transformers grew more throughout this project. I met the nicest bunch working on this zine and I can confidently say that this experience was unforgettable, and I made it out with so many friends. I thank you (dear readers), contributors and everyone who supported this project in any way. Thanks to every single one of you, this project was able to make it out of the "what if" stage!

I hope this project (no matter when you stumble upon it) will be a comfort to you, that, no matter what, you'll find support in places you won't expect it to be. We see you, we hear you and we support you. No matter what you find yourself to be, you shall prevail from anything holding you back. As long as you still function, you survive, you recuperate and then you RISE UP!

This project was made with our collective love of our girl, Megatron. No matter what continuity. I hope you enjoy each and every page of our love for her!

CLOCKING IN!

PAUL 1
KAX M.XG 8
BATMECH 9
STARSCREAM 10
XEON 11
HANABY 12
CF8WRK4U-US 13-19
EKKO 20
KNIGHT 21-25
CLAIRE 26
PAUL 27-35
MECHAGOENNA 36
XEON 37
PUZZLES 38
SPARKLINGSONG 39-40

41-44 . . . . . AECHO
45-48 . . . . . BENEDICCIA
49 . . . . . YUNISKETCH
50 . . . . . AVOIDGHOST
51. . . . . BUNGERMEAL
52 . . . . . ROOTBEERRAT
53-62 . . . . . HARDING
63 . . . . . DELIA
64 . . . . . BREAKDOWN
65 . . . . . BENEDICCIA
66 . . . . . LENA / RAVEN
67-69 . . . . . NUCLEARJAX
70-75 . . . . . REBOOT
76 . . . . . BEE
77 . . . . . MYSTICFOXDESIGNS
78-81 . . . . . ENUSZKA
82-85 . . . . . CREDITS

MEGATRON

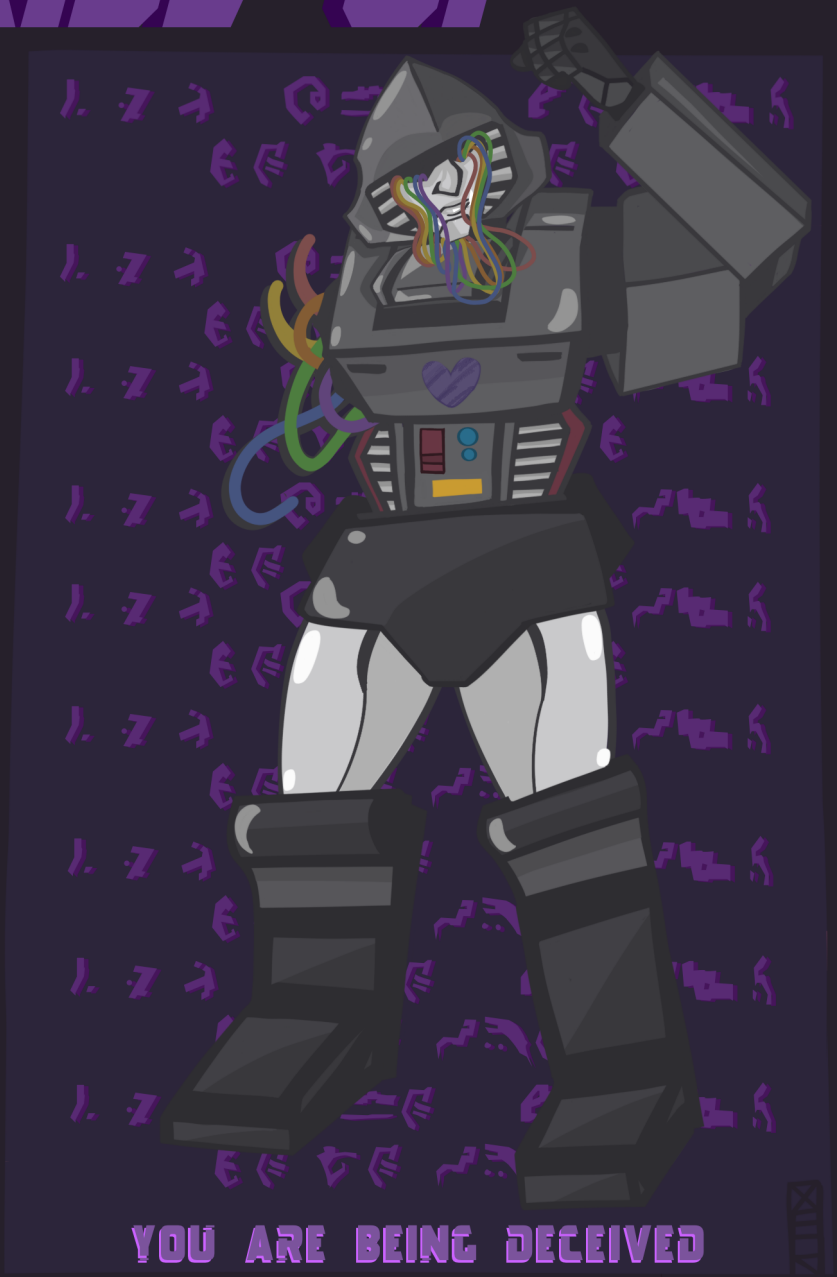
Serving with all her best looks since the 1980s

*Dangerously **evil**? Dangerously **beautiful***

megatron

yeaaa

RISE UP



STAND PROUD

Tomorrow is a blank canvas
What should I draw on it?

THEN SHE ROARED

BY CF8WRK4U-US

As a miner, a bot takes what they've been given.

Which is almost nothing.

Starting as a cold-constructed war-frame they're given a designation number, some meager energon to keep them going, and a task they're expected to perform until their function ends or.... it ends you.

And if you're a miner it is often the latter.

That's why down in the mines most bots treasure the designation they've been given. To the random deposit of numbers, to the single letter, that small bit of identity was all they had that defined them from the nameless machinery they use.

D-16 should have felt the same about her designation.

But she wasn't.

Her station, her function, her name, the very fact she was technically a mech.

All of it felt wrong.

From the labor intensive work that had her and the other bots exhausted, the risky task that nearly ended her function and took the lives of so many of her fellow miners, to the annoyed and condescending way the foreman supervisors tapped at the highlighted marker of her gender that was permanently typed MECH when she tried to correct how they addressed her.

"Stop being so difficult, D-16," they scoffed "I have over a thousand mechs working down here on the daily that I have to manage, you expect me to

suddenly remember one of them decided to be a femme?"

"It's what I would prefer," she said, keeping her voice light but steady.

"Look," The supervisor sighed before twisting the datapad in his servos in a condescending way "I'm just reading what's on your registration documents, the ones you've had since arriving from the well, so they're not wrong"

D-16 couldn't bring herself to say anything.

"Now, are you going to get back to work"? The supervisor said "Or are we still going to have a problem?" She didn't miss how his optics flickered to the armoured security guards behind him.

D-16 stayed silent as she turned and picked up her tools.

Late into their recharge breaks, some miners who still believed in Primus and the 13 Primes prayed to their benevolent creator and his followers for a safe cycle of work or safety for their friends and coworkers.

For D-16, those whispered words she gave were not requests to her god, but questions.

Why was she made to slave away in these mines? Why was it she had to watch her fellow workers risk their lives with little care or honor? And why was it that when she asked for the same civility that any child of Cybertron was due she was threatened by her supervisors?

She was a bot just like them, yet because she and the other miners were cold-constructed, they were the exception.

The exception to proper safety regulations, the exception to civil liberties, and the exception to even the bare rights that any bot should be granted.

Just like she was the exception to the identity she wanted.

Her life, her purpose, her gender, all decided without any consent.

Being a hot-spot bot, a cold-construct, a bot, a femme, or anyone else shouldn't be so rigid! Her frame, her processor, and her spark tell her what she was and what she wanted.

There in her recharge slot, D-16 whispered a promise.

Not to Primus or his more benevolent Primes like Prima or Quintus.

But to the avenger, the outliner, the greatest warrior of all the Primes.

Megatronus.

She made a promise, in the name of the greatest Prime, that she would not stay trapped and laboring away in this accursed mine.

That if it was decided that all she had wanted would be denied to her, then the miner would grasp for it all herself.

It takes sacrifice to get what you want.

But D-16 was willing to put both her body and spark on the line to change the course of her function.

And what was a more appropriate place than the gladiatorial arenas of Kaon.

Then again, it was her only option, really. There were few other ways that a miner could leave the tunnels, but the gladiator profession did promise more freedoms (no matter how short the career path usually was).

D-16 loathed that she had to sign away part of her winnings as a commission fee to the supervisor that recommended her as a fighter. But it was a small price to pay for this opportunity.

Still it wouldn't mean much if she didn't win her first pit fight.

Standing on the other side of the arena her opponent stood tall and menacing, his dark armour stained with splashes of energon from his last victim's opponents like medals of honor.

D-16 did her best to stay composed in the face of the gladiator, but she still managed to get startled as the announcer voice echoed through the monitor from the stadium.

"Bots Of Koan! Is There No One Mech Enough To Stand In The Ring For 3 Minutes With This Titan Of Torment?"

Her opponent smiled pridefully as he banged his shield against his metal chassis, making the crowds shout and scream enthusiastically.

"Who Dares Test Their Skill, Their Strength, Their Stamina! Against Kaon's Own And Still Undefeated Legend, Back-Breaker!"

Her opponent, Back-Breaker, raised his other arm showing off an axe to her and tilting it in a beckoning manner.

Suddenly she heard a bang from behind her, from the corner of her optics she could make out the shape of a mech from inside the bar doors of the backstage of the arena.

"Get out there now!" He hissed "Don't make me use the rod!"

D-16 steeled herself before clenching her own weapon, a rusted sword before making her way to the center while Back-Breaker did the same. Her face-plate grew hot under the howls and shouts from the crowd. Some that encouraged her, but most were shouting for her demise or suggestions of what Back-Breaker should do to her.

"Chop his helm open!"

"Tear him in half!"

"Snuff his spark out!"

Or at the mech she thought she was.

Once the pair met each other in the center, Back-Breaker made sure to lean as close to her as possible before he whispered, breathing his smelly exhaust in her face "Try to make it a good show, won't you mech?"

Her eyes hardened as she hissed back "*I'm a femme!*"

Back-Breaker quirked a brow before huffing "Sure, sure" he leaned back in an easy motion.

The pair waited for the sound of the starting bell. D-16 barely had time to strategize before it sounded and Back-Breaker launched at her axe raised. She barely dodged before the next swing came back around and sliced a sizable way into her shoulder. The crowd boomed at the sight of spilled energon and it seemed to invigorate Back-Breaker as he advanced closer. For the next clicks all D-16 could do was dodge each of his strikes and hold her shaking weapon in a defensive position. But before long her only weapon was knocked away and so was she, knocked to the ground as she wheezed and heaved at all the cuts she received.

"Now aren't you a sorry sight," said Back-Breaker as he held his axe high. "But thanks for putting up a good struggle. Goodbye little mech."

D-16 can't really say what happened but in those words her vision clouded in red, morphing the face of Back-Breaker into the face of the managers and bots that have long tormented and belittled her.

Mech?

Mech?!

She will not die a mech!

Using all her strength she pushed both pedes at Back-Breaker, ruining his balance and sending him down. Giving her just the chance to grab her weapon and rush at him, Back-Breaker managed to lift himself up and knock her weapon away again. But that didn't stop her as she grabbed the taller mechs shield and used it to to twist her opponent and send him flying into the wall arena. She could hear the crowd gasp but still went on her frenzied attack. She didn't give Back-Breaker the chance to rise as she rushed and kicked him once more. As much as Back-Breaker tried to shield

himself, she was on top of him now. Even as he raised his axe to stab at her, D-16 ducked away in time and grabbed his weapon as he still held it. Using all her power, she held her opponent's servo and forced it towards his neck. All she could make out was Back-Breaker's frightened eyes before a spray of energon blinded her.

For a while, all she could make out was her heavy breath and Back-Breakers last choking vents.

Almost in a daze, D-16 rose up and proceeded to the middle of the arena. She grabbed her sword along the way. Then before the eyes of the stadium, she raised her weapon.

“Who is your champion now?” She called

The crowd was silent.

“WHO?” She challenged

The crowd roared and then she roared with them.

Her gladiator days were behind her now, but the rage she had never extinguished. Alight even as she moved away from the arena. Now she led a group of bots much like her, who felt wronged, forgotten, and discarded by the system that was supposed to help them.

In her study she heard a firm knock.

“Come in” she called D-16 or now Megatron changed a lot about herself. The most notable being her name and her voice modulatorShe kept it stern and strong but added a lighter vocal weight to it. Little by little, she was becoming more of the femme she envisioned herself as.

The door opened and entered Soundwave, her second in command.

“Soundwave,” she greeted “What brings you in?”

“Soundwave: recent report,” he answered “New mechs have shown interest in our organization, Vos representatives wishing to set up meeting-”

She rolled her optics. What made those posh Vosians think she wanted any kind of support from them anyway?

“-and new system update you may be interested in”

He held a datapad to her and with a questioning look she grabbed it from him. She nearly crushed the datapad as she skimmed the form being projected.

It was her registration documents. She could still remember the way the managers would wave it at her in a condescending manner. She would have thrown it against the wall if she hadn’t seen the marker on the portion that read her gender.

Instead of the spark crushing glyph that read mech, instead it read *femme*.

“.....How?” She asked

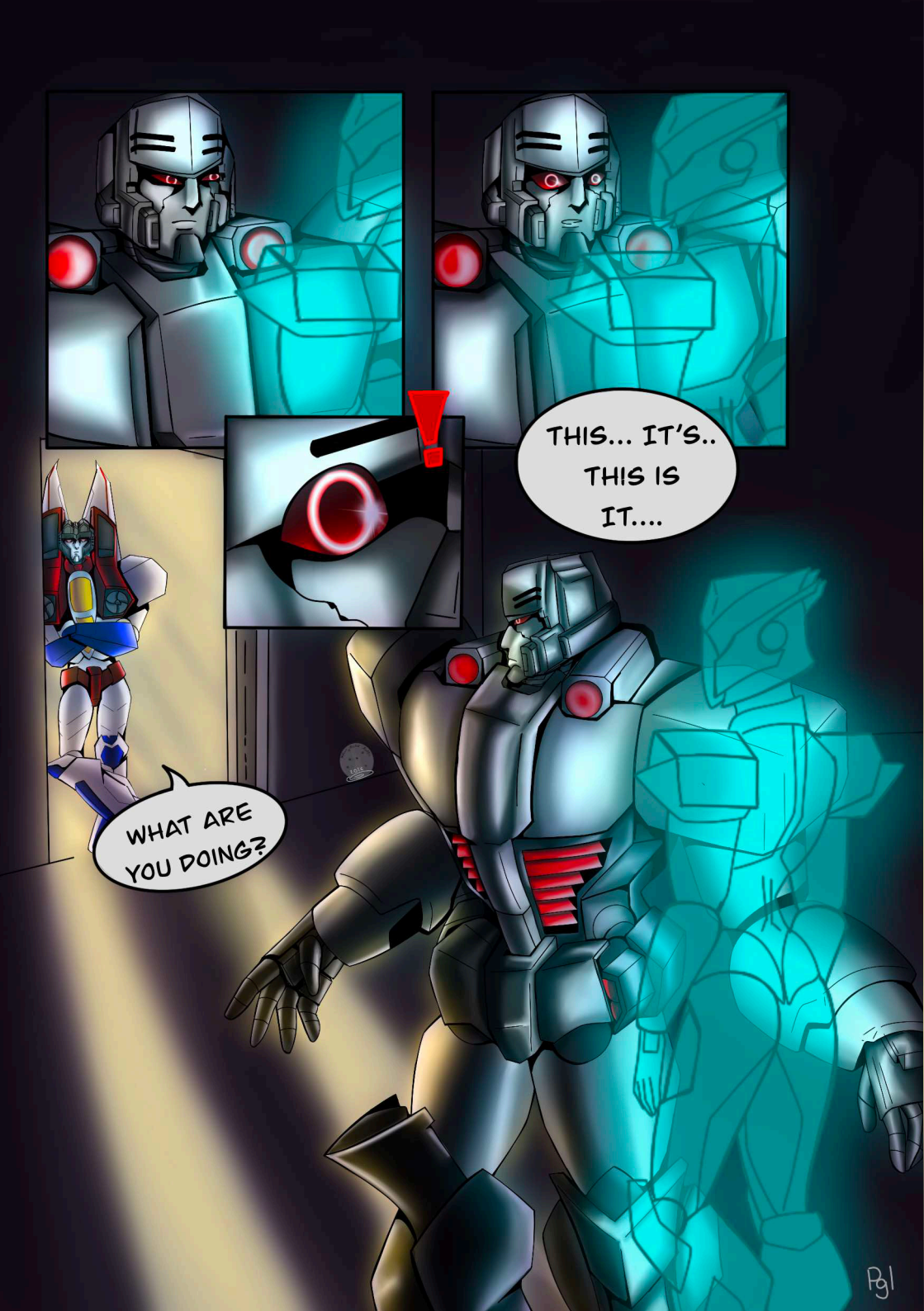
“Soundwave: found system housing these documents has poor security measures,” said the mech. “It was little effort to correct such a mistake”

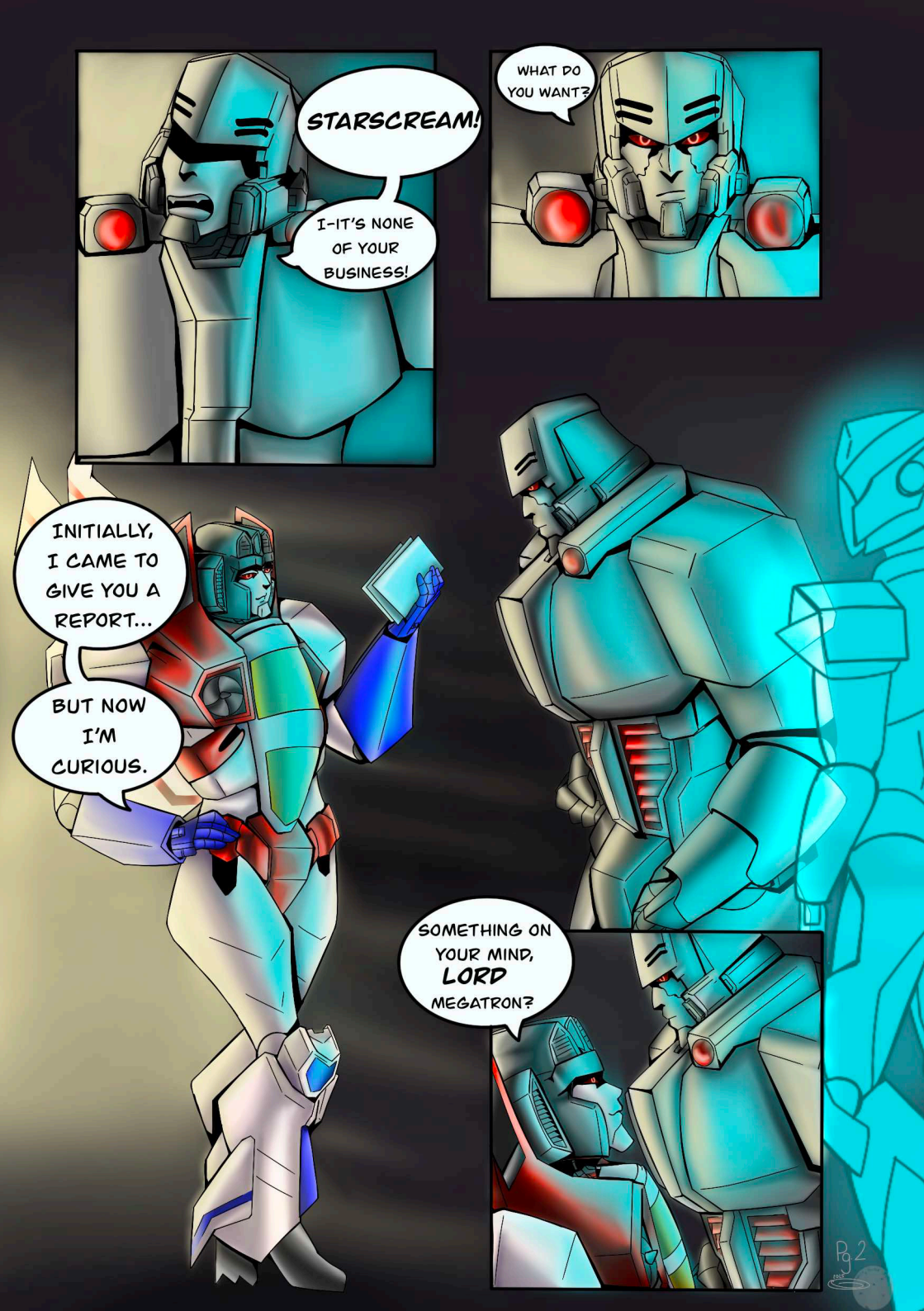
Megatron was quiet for a moment before saying, “Thank you.”

“Anything for you, mistress.”

The femme grinned sharply at her second in command.

@ekkOklo


THIS... IT'S.. THIS IS IT....
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?


STARSCREAM!
I-IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
INITIALLY, I CAME TO GIVE YOU A REPORT...
BUT NOW I'M CURIOUS.
SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, LORD MEGATRON?

JUST GIVE ME THE REPORTS AND GET OUT!
YOU'RE QUESTIONING WHO YOU ARE, ARENT YOU?
LOOK...I GET IT... I'VE BEEN THERE.
LETTING HIS GUARD DOWN
YOU... YOU DO?
DUH.. YOU KNOW I HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN "MALE", RIGHT?

YEAH...BUT I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT.
LOOK... IF YOU'RE STILL UNSURE, WE CAN EXPIRAMENT AND SEE.
LIKE, USING DIFFERENT PRONOUNS AND STUFF.
YEAH... WELL...
STARSCREAM'S GIRLFRIEND?
WE CAN GET VIOLET TO HELP WITH THAT.
REALLY?... I... YEAH I'D LIKE THAT
I WANT TO TRY A NEW LOOK TOO.
Pg.4

B.5

YES!
YES!
CM25

IDOLATRY

Starscream lands with a *thud* on desert ground, legs struggling to keep his weight. Alarms blare in his helm, damage screaming from a punctured wing, and drowsy with lack of energon. Despite that, he raises his helm. Against the harsh sun, Starscream spots *his* powerful silhouette. Draped in a maroon coat that laps in the wind, Megatron looks across the desolate land, face shrouded in shadow except for his bright blue optics.

Starscream washes with relief, alarms quieting for just a nano-klik. He trembles, arms outstretched. "*Megatron!* Old friend!" He nervously laughs, limping forward. "I was worried I had the wrong coordinates! You know how the rust seas mess with our navigational systems."

Megatron doesn't move. Instead, he speaks. However, Starscream's audials must be damaged, because his voice comes out high and scratchy—unlike Megatron at all. "That was the point. I *told* you to stay away from here, *Starscream.*"

Although strange, Starscream doesn't scrutinize it. The fact that Megatron says his designation at all is enough. "Well, you know what they say about me… As much as you shove me away—" Starscream's pede catches on a rock, and he lurches forward. He catches himself, yelping. "W-Woah!!"

His optics are dimming, but he persists. He's close enough to see Megatron in more detail. "I am forever—"

Starscream truly trips now, stumbling into Megatron's open servo. His optics falter, a dark vingette swallowing his vision. "—your loyal servant."

Starscream barely gets to see Megatron's stern face before exhaustion takes hold.

He's limp, loopy from energon loss, but feels Megatron's chassis-heat against him. They move, the wind swiping across his chassis and whistling through his open wounds. Starscream winces, too tired to make noise, but soon the wind dies down, and so does the light. He attempts to reset his optics, but without energon, they weakly sputter.

He's laid down—something cold—and his chassis slumps. His HUD refuses to reboot anything, recycling error messages the more Starscream tries. Then, a large servo clicks something against his side, and Starscream jolts. Something else shuffles, and then immediately, things start to clear. Warning signs dissipate, light grows brighter, and senses slowly return.

Megatron says, "I plugged you into my energon emergency reserves. Don't drain it all."

Starscream nods (he's strong enough to do so now) and resets his optics. They glitch to the exposure but quickly readjust, collecting his new surroundings. He's lying against some ledge (a berth?), hugged by beige, damaged walls. Although there's no wall on his right, occupied by the large figure of Megatron.

Oh, it's a sorely missed sight. Tall, powerful, and framed by strong wings, Megatron stands defiantly, even with nothing to defy. Despite being obscured, Megatron's roughened face brings back memories. Memories of revolution, determination, bravery—leadership like nothing else. Starscream's tried his best to live out his cause, fighting off Autobots in any form they come, but *nothing* comes close to its origin.

Megatron has removed his cape, using it as a cloth to gently rub against Starscream's left wing. Starscream winces at the touch, but sighs at the pain relief it gives. Bodyscrappers' viciousness is no joke. He groans, "*Urgh*... I imagine this is what a Dinobot *chew toy* must feel like."

Megatron faintly smirks. "It's certainly what I imagine one would *look* like."

This time, Starscream double-checks his HUD. His audials *are* fully repaired, but Megatron's voice *still* sounds high and glitched. It must have been damaged in their time away. Starscream chuckles (reminding him of his own sore vocalizer) and says, strained. "And you certainly *sound* like one, too."

Megatron isn't one for laughs, so Starscream doesn't expect him to do so, but Megatron *frowns*. He stops moving, staring at Starscream with dangerous optics, and lowers his wings. ...Either Megatron got a *lot* darker in his time alone, or Starscream said something that dug deep.

Nervous, Starscream mutters, "...Sorry."

He keeps staring, EM field tucked close, but lessens the frown. "...What happened to you?"

Well, Megatron's vocalizer is broken. Starscream is not going to bring it up.

"Bodyscrappers. Blurr is the one responsible for most of this."

Megatron worsens his frown, now for a different reason. "Why. Were. You. Fighting. *Bodyscrappers?*"

"I wasn't *looking* for them, I assure you. I don't know how, but they got wind of my recent 'activities'. Now, there's a *sizable* bounty on my helm." Starscream strains to sit up, and Megatron reluctantly lets him. "I must have been overheard, or maybe they've been tracking me ever since I went out in the desert. The other option is much less pleasant, that Jetf—"

Starscream cuts himself off fast, the sheer thought of what an old friend would do painful to the glossa. He skips the explanation, sure Megatron knows it well. "Well, if it's the second," his expression downturns, "there's *nothing* that can be done about it now, is there?"

He looks to Megatron, who only looks back, an opaque wall of expression. Beyond it, he can see how subtly those words affect him. The loss of Starscream would be the last thing the Decepticon cause needs.

Starscream breaks the tension with a loud vent cycle. "Anyway—" He stands up, unplugs his energon connection, and Megatron follows. Starscream takes a cursory sweep of his surroundings. "So this is where the *great Decepticon leader Megatron* has been living."

Frankly, Megatron lives in *ruin*. They're both standing in a large underground system, aged to time that barely keeps the lights on. He must be in the somewhat furnished "berthroom", with some data-pads, photographs, posters, and bedding. Only a couple of items are displayed—a large map of Autobot territory and a worn mugshot—but most were crumpled in the corner. Starscream notes the handful of scattered replacement plates, populating hidden spots alongside forgotten tools. Megatron must have seen his fair share of repairs after their *last* fight.

Megatron grumbles. "I like the quiet."

Starscream chuckles, taking a languid stroll around his berthroom. "So much so you burrowed underground like a *driller*." He wanders, looking mindlessly. Megatron follows close behind. "A lot of spare parts." Starscream briefly recalls their last fight with the Autobots, leaving most of them severely injured. "…Must have needed a lot of repairs."

Megatron huffs and hesitates to speak. "…There aren't many parts out

there similar to me."

Starscream turns around, looking at Megatron in full view. Now, thanks to the room's lights, he can see Megatron's full chassis. His wings are wide, low with usual irritation, but strong in framing his silver and black frame. Despite the parts scattered around, Megatron's chassis is still damaged. Large scratches across his chest, punctures between slats—not to mention large soldering marks across some plate edges. Starscream frowns. Usually, when damaged, a medic would surgically replace plates, not solder down new ones. Not to mention, Megatron's plates looked just as they were before separating.

"Did you ask a medic to repair you?"

Megatron grimaces. "…Knock Out wasn't of much help."

"How come? Were the injuries so severe you needed to solder down new parts?"

He pauses for a moment, limbs visibly stuttering to move, but remain still. "All the details are between me and Knock Out."

Starscream sighs. That's the most he'll get out of that thread. He drops the topic and looks at the walls. He looks closer to the mugshot—a polished Megatron with a subtle smile. Starscream subconsciously mirrors it.

Megatron groans quietly and grumbles. "No need to idolize old photos."

Starscream chuckles. "It's not idolatry if it's still accurate."

He scoffs. "They're far from accurate now."

Starscream frowns and turns around. "Why not? All I see is a youthful leader before he launches the best change Cybertron's seen."

Megatron grimaces. "The Decepticons destroyed Cybertron, no thanks to me."

Starscream darkens his voice. "*Megatron*, the Decepticons *didn't* destroy Cybertron. It was the *Autobots*. Just because we lost a fight doesn't mean you *destroyed* our cause."

Megatron doesn't bite. "We lost a fight *I* was the leader of, not like I was a leader to *begin* with."

Starscream gasps. "You *are* a leader! You've *been* the fearless leader of the Decepticons, even after our defeats!"

He frowns further. His tone gets darker, voice quieter. "Is my command to flee truly the action of a '*fearless*' leader?"

Starscream hardens his expression. "*Megatron*, you are *not* a coward. Even though some of our fights didn't end in victory, it is *not* a representative of your being as a whole. You are the most *resilient* mech I know."

Megatron scowls further than he usually does. There's a long pause—the absence of Megatron's EM field telling—and Starscream huffs. "Do you not remember our fight in Iacon central?" A fight against the Aerial bots, gruesome and nearly fatal. "The one in Kaon's mines?" A toil of power with the last Autobot suppressors. "The riot in Altihex?" The protoform camp turned revolutionary by his inspiration.

He frowns further, but doesn't answer.

Starscream sighs. If he couldn't remember his victories, Starscream would do so for him.

"Here," he turns to a corner of the room with tucked-away data-pads, "one of these must have records of your fights."

Suddenly, Megatron surges forward. "*Starscream*, don't go through my data-pads."

Starscream stays to his word. "Megatron, you can't possibly *forget* your fights. One of these has to hold *something*."

Starscream grabs a pile and sifts through the front pages. A handbook on structural renovation, a poetry collection, a geological review of Iacon's cave systems.

Megatron growls and swipes at Starscream's servo. "*Give them back*."

He flips through a couple more. A Cybertronian anatomy textbook, a handout for chassis-reconstruction in accidents, a study on Cybertronian gen—

Starscream's processor chews, confused, right before Megatron snatches the data-pads from his servos. His damaged voice cracks. "*STARSCREAM*."

A study on Cybertronian gender politics and expression.

Starscream stares into the distance, thinking. Cybertronian gender politics. And its expression. His processor whirs. Cybertronian anatomy. Chassis-reconstruction. …The "broken" vocalizer from Megatron. The jagged scars across Megatron's chest.

He looks over to Megatron, confused. Megatron's holding the data-pads in an iron grip, avoiding optic-contact.

They're refusing to face Starscream.

"…Megatron?"

They growl, vocalizer fritzing. "It's *none* of your *business*."

"I—I didn't know t—"

Megatron snarls. "*Don't*."

There's a long silence, only populated by their hesitant engines rumbling. Starscream starts quietly. "…Should I call you something different? A different designation?"

They cycle a vent. "…My designation is Megatron."

Starscream nods, although he knows Megatron won't see it. He takes a long moment to think of his next words."…I don't want to assume what those data-pads mean. So…" Starscream chews his derma. "Are… Have you…"

Megatron grimaces. "For a little while."

"Okay… Did—"

"Did I do this myself?" Megatron cuts Starscream off. They face him, scowl deep.

Starscream stops, spark low in his chest. His wings stiffen, where Megatron's spread further, intimidating. Megatron's temper has reached a boiling point, although seemingly superficial.

"I took a tool to my neck, secluded in my chamber, and screwed my vocalizer out of tune on *purpose*. It was a foolish idea, fueled by selfish desires, and now my voice *crackles*," it does so, "when it pleases."

Starscream's face falls, and Megatron only continues. "I took apart my plates and tried to reassemble them with others. I couldn't find anything that fit my chassis, so I gave up and welded my plates shut. I thought about replacing my chassis altogether, but trying to do so now would endanger the entire Decepticon population."

Megatron's EM field starts to melt, reaching Starscream as it bleeds further from its shell. It's a miserable sadness.

"I experimented and I failed. I realized something as selfish as appearance shouldn't be scrutinized over." They frown further, and their wings dip. The sadness finally reaches their optics. "…I shouldn't treat myself when I've failed my bots."

The silence is a horrible weight between them two.

Starscream watches Megatron. His processor spins, slowly eating their words as Megatron keeps a stone-cold stare. It's trying to be strong. Trying to be intimidating, to scare Starscream away from further questioning and leave them alone to wallow. To any other bot, it would scare their recipient away, but Starscream knows them too well. Blue optics flicker with a deep conflict, something hidden until this very conversation. It's not ready to be revisited. …It probably was never ready to be tackled.

After several moments of patience, Starscream slowly raises his wings. He spreads his EM field, warm in comparison to Megatron's scaldingly cold one.

"…Megatron, do you remember that final stand we had with the Autobots on Earth? Before we dispersed?"

Megatron's expression slightly softens, but with confusion.

"With all these sour memories, you must remember it with scorn. The number of casualties over the number of those saved."

Megatron offlines their optics, facing away. "*Starscream*."

"But, you must remember how you fought up until the last blow. How you courageously sacrificed yourself in an attempt to kill your former friend, and told us to flee."

They growl louder. "*STARSCREAM*."

"From all my memories of you, in the prime of this war, I remembered your selflessness. I remembered your bravery in the face of death, the blows despite the threat of injury."

Megatron flickers their optics back online, returning optic-contact. "*…Starscream—*"

"In that fight, where it ended in you scrapping for parts, it also ended with the rest of your Decepticons being *saved*."

Starscream softens his look, EM field reflecting the change. "You *sacrificed* your spark to keep ours safe."

Megatron's expression downturns, moving from anger to sorrow.

"You are nothing short of the most selfless bot I know."

Megatron flares their field, suddenly realizing how far it's stretched. It shrinks back fast, out of Starscream's warm one. Their wings stutter. "…I lost."

"Losing a fight doesn't mean you've lost the war. Your army is still out there, only alive due to *your* decisions." Starscream takes a careful step forward. "We owe it to you for our lives every cycle."

Their wings twitch, almost a flutter.

"Megatron."

Starscream takes another step closer. He expands his EM field further, melting with Megatron's chassis. Megatron stiffens.

"A bot who chooses their death over the death of their cause is one that can very much indulge in 'something selfish'."

Megatron shakes. Parts of their chassis clatter together, almost hidden by the loud churning of their internal fans. Megatron tries to vent evenly, and the grip of their data-pads makes sparks spit from the seams.

Megatron's face grows a hint darker with energon. Their optics glitch as coolant beads in its corners.

Starscream cycles a long vent before taking another step forward, gentle.

"…Now, Megatron… Should I refer to you as mech, femme, or something different?"

A full-chassis shiver goes through Megatron, and their EM field spills out again. Overwhelming and conflicting, Megatron bleeds with a deep relief. It encapsulates Starscream, trying to mix with his outward acceptance in a touchless embrace.

Megatron's cooling-fans click on, their face hot as coolant continues to form.

They chuckle, broken. "Y-You've always had a way with words."

Starscream smiles. He steps closer. "I just have a way with understanding my leader." He sighs, compassionate. "Now, am I referring to you as mech, femme, or otherwise?"

Megatron sighs with him and looks to Starscream, soaked with a relieved exhaustion.

She clears her vents. "…Femme."

Starscream smiles wider, looking up to meet Megatron's optics. They're welled with emotions, but strong. Just as Megatron always is.

"…Well, I may need to amend my statement from earlier."

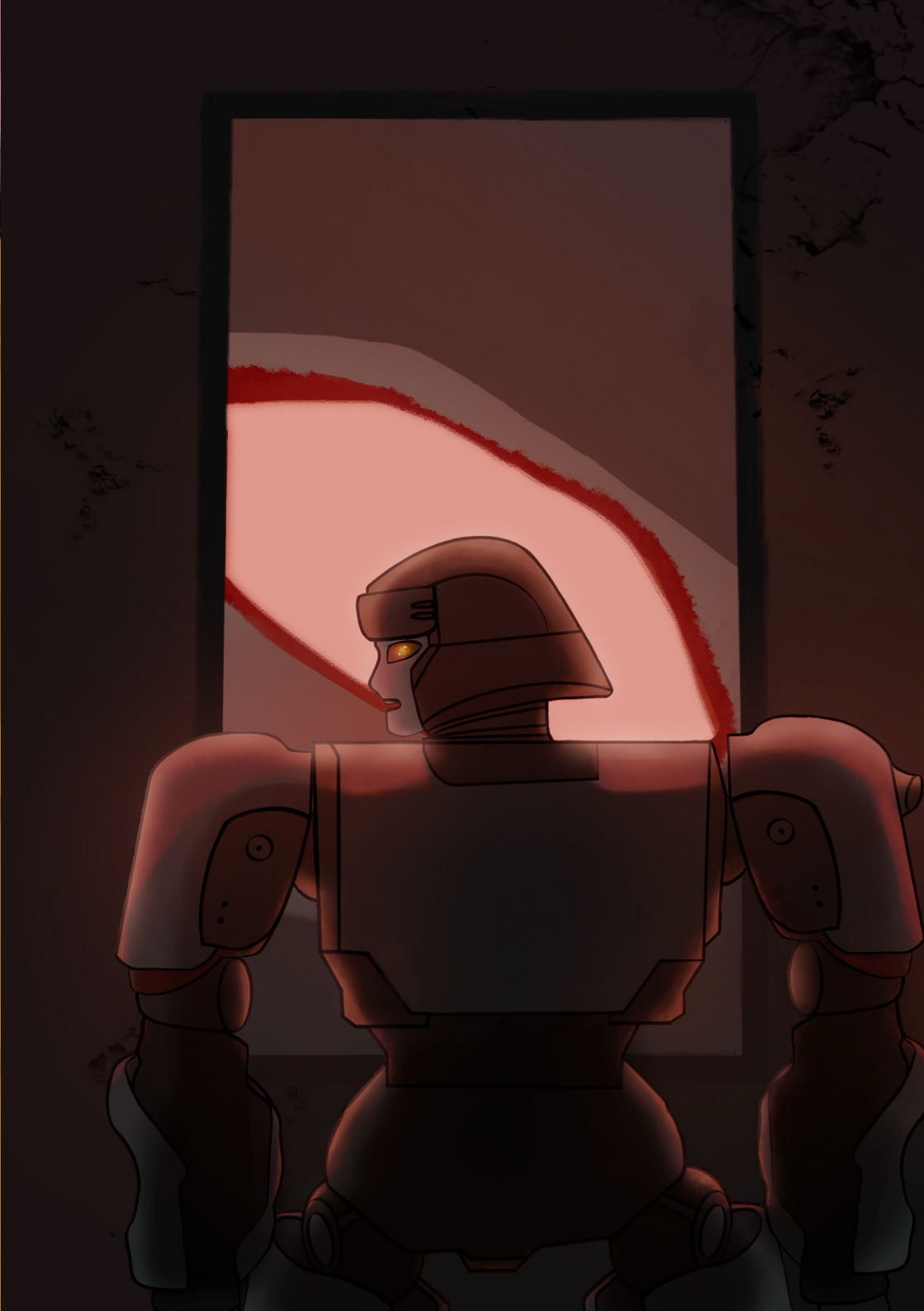
Megatron's optics flicker a couple of times, confused. She asks, "Which statement?"

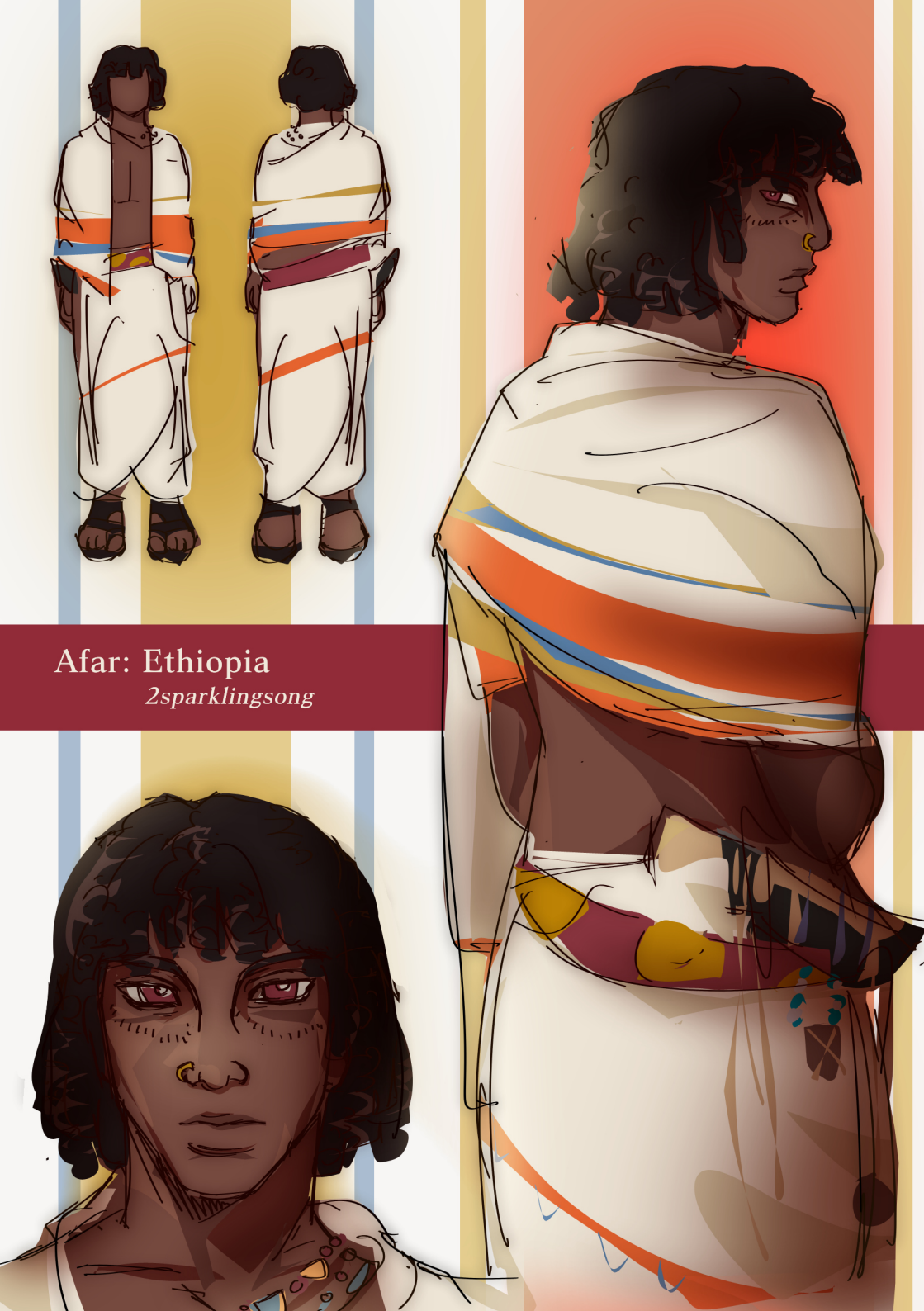
Starscream beams. "You're the most resilient *femme* I know."

Her EM field wavers, several emotions popping up and arguing for control. But, even though Megatron goes to scowl, she glows with gentle euphoria. Her frown struggles against a wide smile.

"…You *fool*."

Starscream giggles. "And I will forever be *your* loyal fool, Lady Megatron."




Afar: Ethiopia
2sparklingsong

Hmong: North Vietnam
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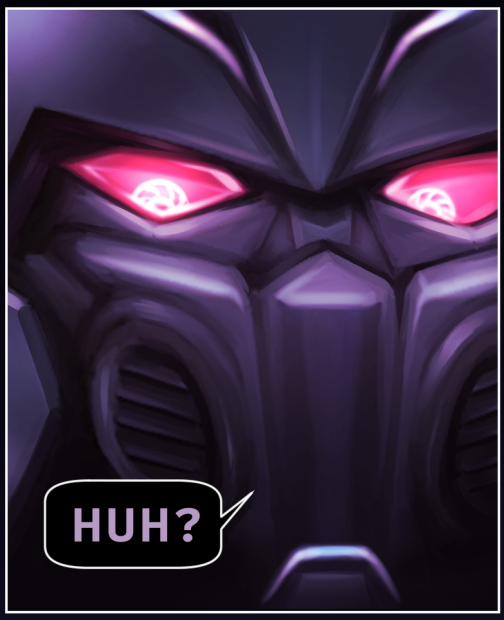
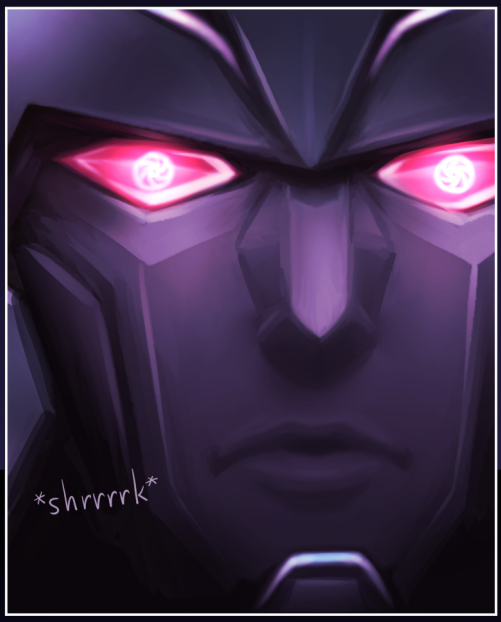
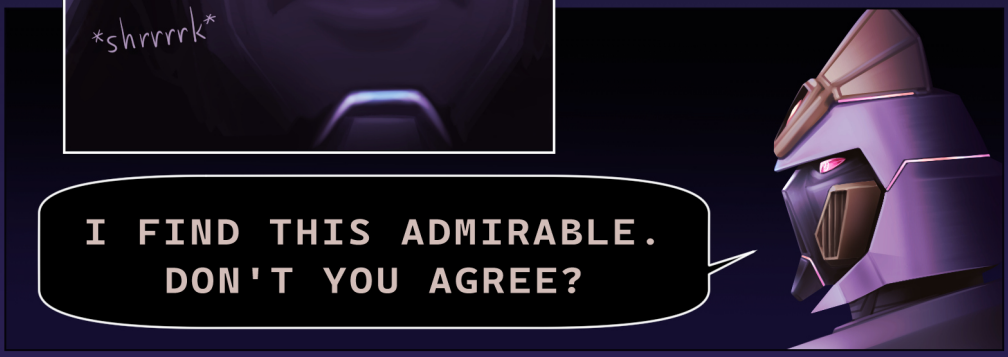
STRIKA! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU SAUNTERING ABOUT THESE HALLS AGAIN
I TRUST THAT ALL IS WELL, DEAR SIBLING?
SISTER





I QUITE LIKE THE WAY IT SOUNDS. IT IS REMINISCENT OF THE STARS, THE MOUNTAINS AND TITANS OF OLD

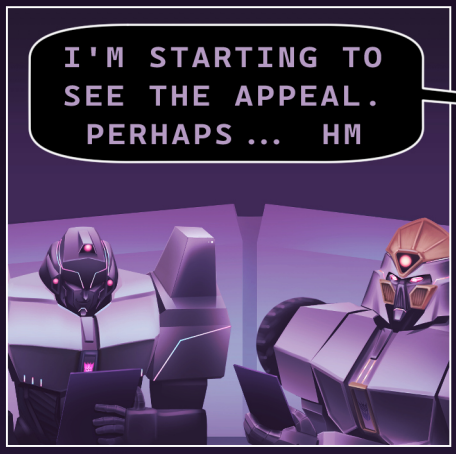


ONE QUESTION BEFORE YOU LEAVE:
WHAT HAPPENED DURING YOUR LATEST CONQUEST?
DID YOU APPREHEND THOSE PESTS?

WE TERMINATED THEM, OF COURSE.
NO SURVIVORS.

EXCELLENT!
YOU DID WELL, STRIKA.

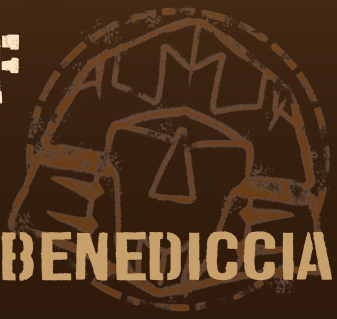
THANK YOU, MEGATRON.
ANYTHING FOR THE CAUSE.



EXCELLENT

SO AM I,
DEAR SISTER

THE VANITY OF TYRANTS



BY BENEDICCIA

Frame incongruence – a condition observed most commonly among cold constructed Cybertronians—though not exclusive to them—causing feelings of distress from a misalignment of a bot's physical form and their neurological self as a result of unrealized sentio metallico formation. These feelings persist throughout one's life but can possibly be alleviated by frame modifications, scanning a different alt-mode, or reframing.

"New body, but the face never changes. Never underestimate the vanity of tyrants."

Vanity, what did *he* know about *vanity?* He who was forged in the golden opulence of Iacon. He think him vain? So be it. Let him and his Autobots think so. But his vanity was *nothing* in comparison to the lineage of Primes, to the lineage of Autobots and their senators.

Optimus would never understand that. Four million years and he remained blind and uncomprehending of why Megatron's revolution was necessary.

His body was not his own. It never would be, he had concluded, bitterly, so long ago. His spark was placed in a cheap, mass-manufactured shell—disallowed the privilege of natural protoform formation.

He has changed frames so many times over the span of his life, over the course of the war. Gray, silver, black. Drill, tank, gun, plane. Some looked similar, others—like this one—looked radically different.

He wasn't onlined with a choice of what he looked like, of what his function was. He wasn't built to have a choice. And how ironic it was, that even with

a choice, nothing he chose ever felt right—not for long, at least. He was certain some functionist politician would have had something to say about that—something about 'defying his Primus-ordained form' or some such regressive nonsense.

No matter the paintjob or alt-mode. He could be content with one frame for millennia and another for only a scant few stellar cycles.

Even this frame, this one of sleek black plating and purple biolights, of deadly grace and power—his favorite one he's had—made him feel a stranger when he saw his reflection.

Just as every frame before this one had.

And so, he would shed this one too, this beautiful frame, one day when seeing himself in it inevitably became too much to bear.

Soundwave had asked him once, early in the war, if he wanted to… 'experiment' and handed Megatron a datapad detailing medical research on 'frame incongruence'. He was grateful that he didn't have to put his feelings into words for once; the usually taciturn Soundwave did it for him that time.

"Ravage: was 'he' once, now 'she'," the blue mech had explained. "Members of gestalts: often refer to themselves as Nexus Prime did. Femmes of Caminus: honor Solus—"

Megatron lifted a servo to stop the mech from going on, "I do *not* wish to attach myself to the language of Primes nor liken myself to them," he said.

It was a common misconception that Megatron's name was derived from Megatronus Prime, if one had only ever heard the way his name was said and not seen the way it was spelled. If one looked at the glyphs his name used, they would realize that they were entirely different to the ones that made up Megatronus's.

Early on, when Megatron had still been a miner, the unusual combination of glyphs in his name often led it to being interpreted as a spelling error and misread as 'Megaton'.

He did not name himself after Megatronus Prime nor did he see a kindred spirit in The Fallen.

Soundwave nodded, "Some Cybertronians take inspiration from the genders and appearances of organic species—"

Megatron made a noise of disgust, "*No.*" He did not liken himself to organics and their cultures either.

Soundwave was silent for a moment, then asked, "Observation: No change in pronouns desired?"

Megatron was quiet for several kliks. What *did* he want? All he knew was that something didn't feel right and he couldn't pinpoint how to fix it. The idea of changing the way he was referred to chafed at him. It gave him a sort of out-of-body feeling, like he was being referred to as someone else. "I don't know," he responded honestly.

Soundwave nodded again and tilted his helm, "Megatron: Want different alt-mode? Frame modifications?"

His body was still formatted for a mining drill alt-mode, although the drill attachment had been removed—making it look more like some form of tank. Altering his frame… that brought many possibilities. "Yes, I think so," he answered.

He had seen others who had remade themselves, they too discontent with their given frames, and found something they could be happy with. He envied their certainty; how did they know what they felt was right? How did they know what they wanted?

Since that conversation, he has gone through well over a dozen reframes. They all gave him a euphoric thrill initially that made him think *yes, this might finally be the one!* Only for him to grow dissatisfied with it the more he looked at himself. It was a point of frustration for him.

The one certainty he had though was his face. He never changed his face—would never. He did not mind it; in fact, he rather liked his face. Though some reviled him for his low caste, his ruggedness, and heavy mining helmet. Others, when brave enough, complimented his features. The curve of his nose, the shape of his derma, the dark gaps around his optics that made their red glow appear akin to hot coals. He did not get to choose his face, but he liked it nonetheless. It was a small comfort when the rest of him felt foreign.

He had been asked during his gladiatorial days, by some daring mechs, why

he did not change these things—he was no longer toiling in the mines at that point, so he was technically free to do as he pleased with his frame. Certainly, they had argued, you would attract more potential patrons if you looked prettier. Because a miner could not be beautiful in the eyes of high-caste socialites.

He thought about altering his face on several occasions, but he never did. It wasn't about being attractive or getting more patrons, or even the fact that he himself liked his face.

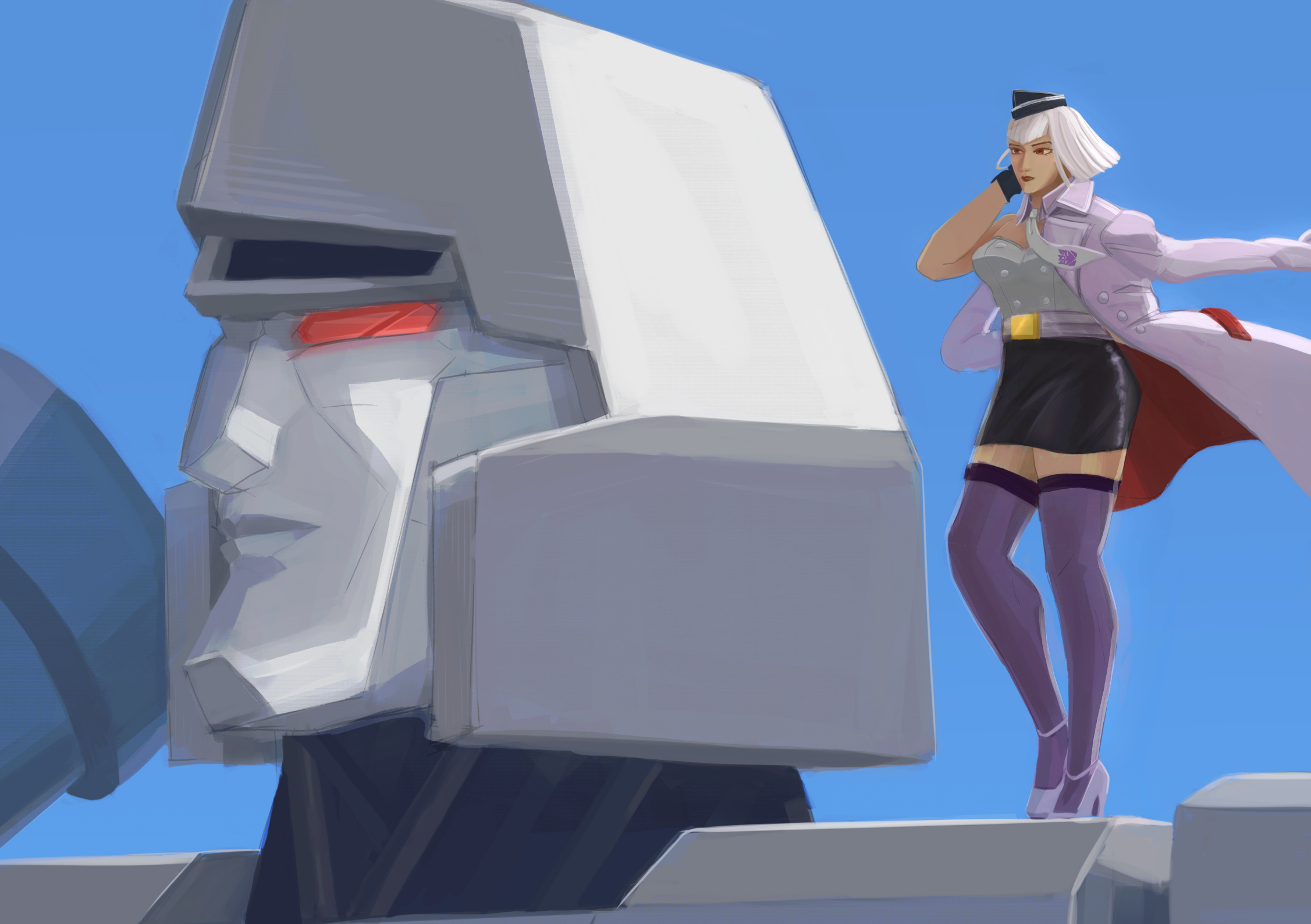
It was a privilege to have a face—because so many others had theirs taken away from them against their will. It was his face. His to control and keep.

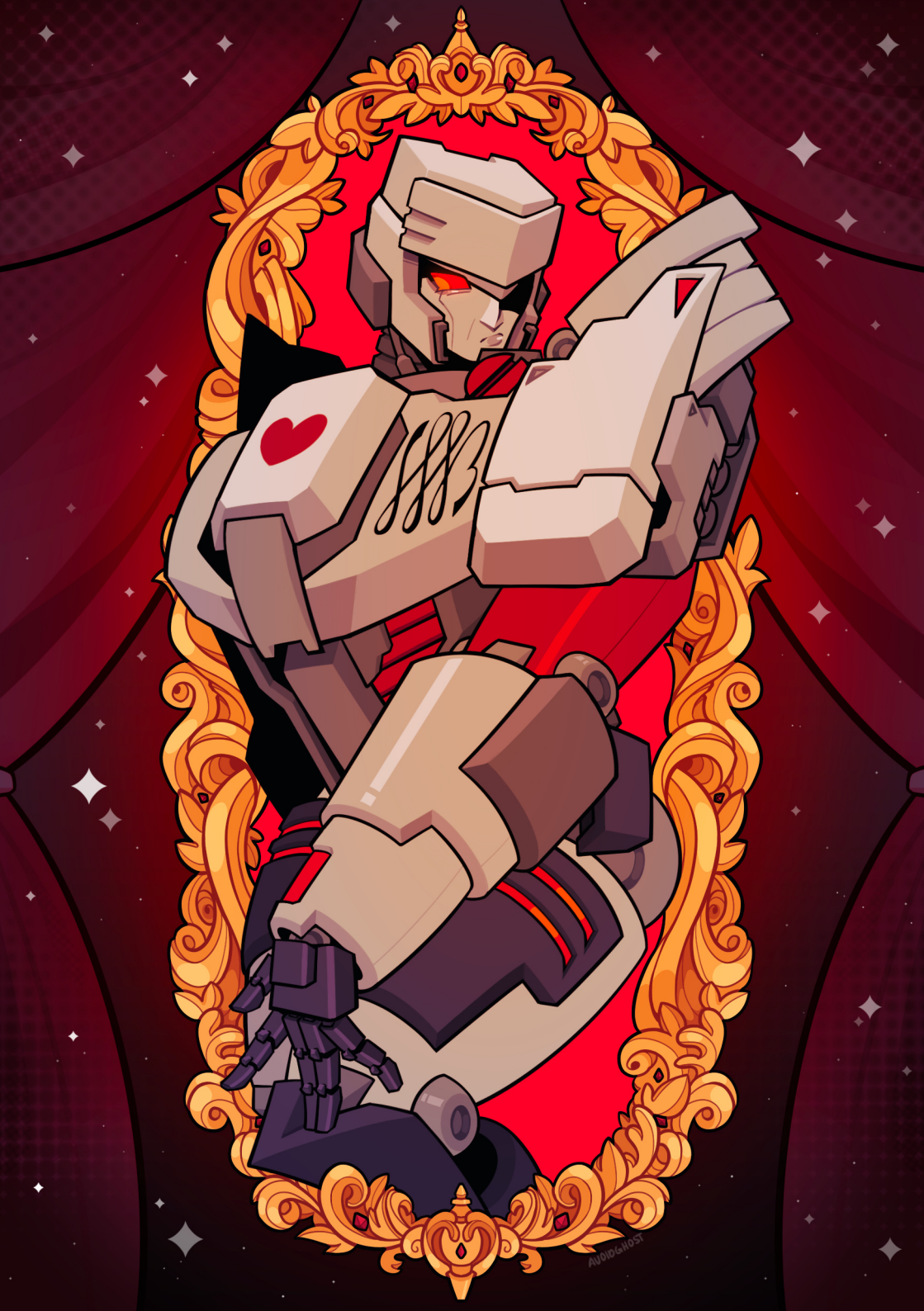
As for the rest of him… well, he resigned himself to dissatisfaction long ago. It was simply one more stone to place on his mountain of burdens.

He didn't have a conversation about his 'incongruence' with Soundwave ever again. Nor did he discuss it with Shockwave—though he suspected the scientist knew, given he was the one who oversaw all of Megatron's reframes. Ultimately, his feelings on the matter were secondary. His frame, in whatever form it may take, was a vessel for his will—a tool. A means to an end, for his revolution, his war, his Decepticons. And that's what was important.

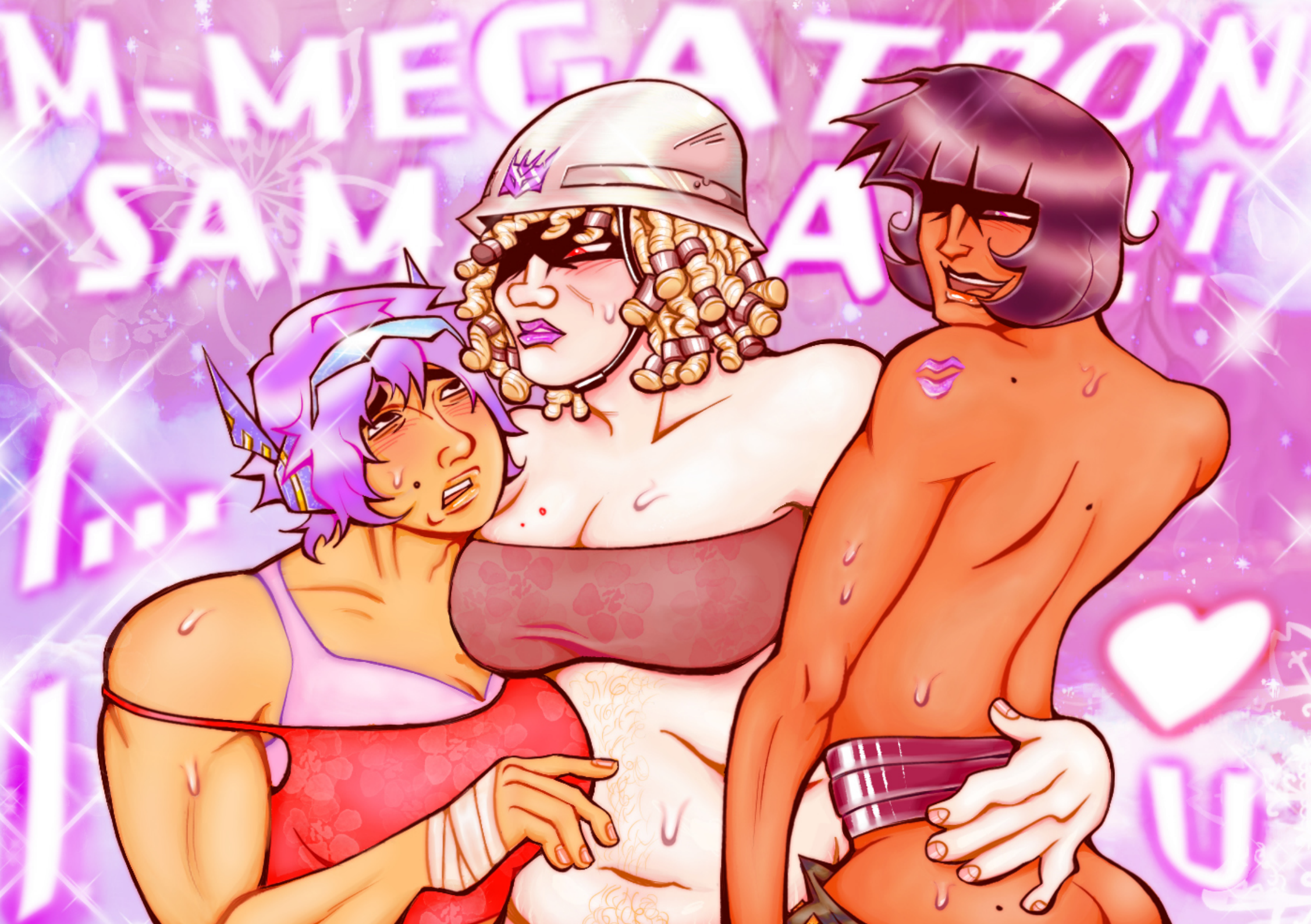
So his feelings… his questioning? He buried it. Buried it deep until it reared its head once more and he couldn't ignore it any longer. As it always did.

"It's not vanity, Prime," he said to the silence of his cell. And that was something Optimus Prime would never understand.




AUDIOGHOST

Megatron Megatron Megatr
TERRIFYING
EXCLUSIVES
How to serve the Royalty ft Inferno & Scorponok
The Maximals (Especially Dinobot) are GROSS, DUMB & LOSERS?
Megatron spills the tea~
Inside the life of Megatron
You won't believe what she's planning!!
COMES with FIG!!


M-MEGATRON
SAMA!!
I LOVE U

COMMERCE, PRUDENCE, INDUSTRY

BY HARDING

The constant, repetitive hiss of the pistons are almost lulling in a sense, music to her aching bones and aching, burning body. She doesn't think she remembers a time where she wasn't exhausted, when she didn't hear the gears or the rubbing, bleeding of needles or the sick crack of an arm getting caught in the all revolving, all encompassing machinery.

All she knows is the machine, is the work, is the factories. She's gone from poorhouse to poorhouse, always working, always trying to do the best she can. She's grown up in these cramped rooms, heat against her fingers, calloused and hard and oh, so, not ladylike. Her life has been lived in dirty condition, cockroaches skittering behind her machine.

Lines of her next poem ring out in her head, but she tosses them aside as she works. They are no good, they will not make people see; they will not be true to herself.

The first incorrect line is: *When I was a boy.* Stop, rewrite, that is not correct. It is never correct, however, writing *When I was a girl,* into the beginning line of her poem will get her killed, hung, shot dead, skull caved in along the sides of a dirty alleyway. Rats will pick at her skin, muscles, suck at her marrow. All of her efforts would have been for nothing. It is not as if people know her identity, but they do know her as a boy, a male, as something she is not, something she was born as, wet and crying and trembling and wrong. She was born wrong. What can she do about that other than use it to her advantage? She is a woman pretending to be a man, as all the women do—Emily Brontë using Ellis Bell as her pen name, George Elliot written in place of Mary Evans—She is all a woman could be, sometimes she believes she is more of a woman than anybody else, like more monster than human, an animal in people skin.

When I, not unlike you, was young

I listened to steam rise and gears hiss

You listened to bird calls and laughter

What is so different between us?

Is it I? Or is it you?

She almost shakes her head, as if that would help get rid of the poem. She knows what is different, she knows how the story goes; she knows how the newspaper executives will read it and shake their heads and laugh and rip it up. Who doesn't know about work conditions? Who doesn't know about the poor? About the slums hiding in the shadows of high society, scurrying around like the same rats that infest their walls? The people rotting alive along the dirty street sides?

She wishes she had her notebook with her, so she could jot it down and then scribble it out. At least then, the horrid poem would leave her head. At least then, she could perhaps try and edit it, remove the bad and keep the good; edit the good, remove the bad.

The yell of the foreman's "shift over!" takes her from the almost dreamlike state her mind is in. She knows she is at the factory, she always knows, and yet, she is able to imagine being somewhere different, somewhere else, where she is happy and there is no money, no poverty, no hatred, and she is a girl.

She waits until her replacement filters in. He's barely fourteen, younger than she was when she got this specific job, with baggy clothes hanging off of his thinned frame and black circles under his pale eyes, and she has never said a single word to him.

Soundwave glances at her as his own replacement fills in, somehow so incredibly knowing in his expressionless face. She's known him for years, before the explosion, before the burning, before the damage.

You were not made for factory life, you were not made to be hidden away by men less than you; you were made for me, her brain suggests, in some haze of

love and friendship and how much he means to her. He is all that she is sometimes. She is her brother and friend and, in some sense of the word, her soulmate. Bosom friends, even, if they were still children—if they were *rich* children—laughing, dewy, mid-morning grass against their shins.

She moves along the crowd as best as she can, brushing against people in the same monotonous, tedious, never-ending work day. Her boy clothes are sweaty and unkept and disgusting, and so are everybody elses'.

As she and Soundwave make their way into the large alleyway—the only exit for the workers, for the poors. The owners have their own exit, a door that leads to the sidewalk, a normal door, for *normal* people, not *them*—she watches the woman come out of their own stations, coming from the same door they did. She's almost burning with envy. They can wear their woman clothes, have their dresses swish at their ankles, and she cannot. She knows logically that working in long skirts and blouses is not as safe as working in trousers, but she cannot help but want. She wants to be known as a woman, as a real woman, as a determined woman. She wants to wear blouses and have a chest to *hide*, she wants to have to pinch the sides of her skirt to keep the edges from soaking into muddy water. She wants to tie her hair up instead of keeping it trimmed short. She wants, she wants, she wants. She wants a lot of things, and all of those things unattainable. The only way she could do it is if she worked hard, saved up so much money, and went somewhere else, where nobody could possibly know her name (not that a lot of people do, not her real, poor name, at least.), where she could wear her girl clothes and gossip with the other woman and try and find a husband that wouldn't care about what she was born as. She would have to pretend to be mute, as her voice is just too deep to be a girl's, but she could manage. She could try.

Soundwave keeps himself close to her—not in a way that would raise any suspicion, he's too good for that—like he's some sort of protector, like she's really a normal girl and he's her protective brother, keeping her safe from the men she works with day after day.

They stick to the side as they walk through the soaking city street, mud sticking to her shoes. Her boy clothes cling to her body as the weather continues in fat, wet drops of chilly rain.

Her and Soundwave's apartment is on the upper floor, with the communal water closet and wash rack in the basement. The roof is sagging with age,

and it has no rooms, with only a scrap cloth curtain separating her mattress on one side of the room and his own on the other. They have a tiny kitchen in between their mattresses, and a window looking towards another building that looks exactly like her own.

She pulls her curtain closed as they enter, and she hears Soundwave lift his mattress up, snatching the letters from underneath it. She has never tried to read them, not that she isn't curious what he and Jazz say to each other. It is none of her concern, she supposes. She doesn't go through Soundwave's personal items, and he does not go through her own—not that she *has* any love letters.

Her suspenders slip from her shoulders—and it makes her feel so feminine, a butterfly unraveling itself from its cocoon; man to woman. She strips off her shirt, feeling the water try and suction to her skin. She doesn't look down, she doesn't see her lack of chest. She peels off her dark trousers, and folds it over the cover, on the heavy slit between the ceiling and the cloth. She opens her small hope chest—her only piece of furniture, and the only piece of furniture in their apartment that wasn't essential—and finds her girl clothes—her *real* clothes—folded at the top. She takes her dress out, as well as her corset.

It's a flimsy little thing, and she bought it third-hand, and she absolutely adores it. She slips it on and tightens it against herself, imagining having a chest that would fit in it. In her corset and cropped girl underwear—which she wears under her trousers, unknown to her employer, unknown to the rest of the world, just like a normal girl—she feels like herself. Really like herself.

She pulls her dress over her head and pulls it down. It's a lavender colour, and it fits against her hips. Her corset gives the illusion of wider hips, larger chest and a thinner waist. It is her only dress. She got it out of the alleyway at a woman's shop and cleaned it up.

She pulls her curtain back as the door to their apartment opens and Jazz lets himself in. He takes off his hat and takes off his wet coat. She takes a quick glance out the window to confirm that the storm has gotten worse.

Soundwave looks up at him, rapidly. He's sitting on his mattress, blanket around his legs, letters in hand. Megatron catches the brief change in his

eyes, love, affection, hope.

"Hey, Megs!" he greets, using a nickname of her girl name. Warmth and pride flutters in her chest, flickering like a candle.

"Jazz," she greets, nodding her head at him, arms crossed against her chest. She likes him, likes him for her friend.

Jazz hands her the latest newspaper. She has no idea how he manages to get his hands on them, as he lives in a much worse neighbourhood than she does, with a large homeless population due to the lack of factories and poor jobs—jobs that nobody wants to do, jobs that pay terribly— that will take in non-whites. Jobs for black people are rare in the city, and she only knows a few big factory employers that would hire any. She knows of no higher paying jobs that will take non-whites either. The paper doesn't deliver to it either. (The only reason Soundwave gets hired for factory jobs is because, if he stays out of the sun, he can pass as white, even if he doesn't exactly look it.)

She takes the newspaper with practiced calmness and just as a lady would, and sits down on her mattress. She hears Jazz walk over and start talking to Soundwave, but she tunes them out in order to focus on the paper.

She skips around, trying to find the latest poems.

Finally, she spots the familiar title and her boy pen name, *Whips in Winnipeg*, it reads, although that was not the title she had brought to the newspaper. She frowns when she reads the changes in words, although she is not surprised. She has published many, many poems in the paper, and she has had many, many poems switched around, the meanings twisted. She tells them not to change it, and they change it anyway. No newspaper company wants to admit that their undergarments are made by starving, exhausted children, nobody wants to hear about the marks on Soundwave's back from the employer's whip right after the accident, right after he had been changed for life because of unsafe work conditions.

Her girl poems, however, seem to be loved.

When I See You, a poem by Megatron, is what the paper says. There is a euphoric thrill to see her name, her real name, her real girl name, in the

paper, written in bold. This is me, it says to the world, I am here and I am real. Of course, nobody knows that is her real name, nobody knows who she is, that she lives in the slums, that she isn't a girl by birth but by mind and soul and everything in between.

Jazz bursts out into laughter, and Megatron looks up, watching him lean onto Soundwave, touching, happiness leaking out of him in waves. Jazz is the type of person who lights up a room, and between her own joy of her name, and his song-like laughter, she feels right at home.

Queen Victoria's Tea Party, 1840

Of course you love him

Of course he loves you

You laugh and the covers slip off

People may scoff, but not us

I know how good he is for you

I know I dislike limericks

I know you know that too

Nobody has ever known me

Ho'ever you know me, you do

Lady

I am not who I see in the mirror, for that is made for the world

I am not as proper as I should, for that is for God

I am but a woman, soft and succinct

Those who cannot call me lady are not ladies themselves

All of the women in the world are like me, and I, like them

We all will be wed, and dressed and spoiled by men

We will all be ladies, ladies are us

For I am a woman

Megatron has the pencil half in her mouth, chewing on the eraser. She has her notebook open, and she is laying half on the floor, half on her mattress, with her bottom half raised. The sky is black, storm clouds still rolling overhead in the night. Her candle shimmers with light, illuminating the small apartment.

She has clippings of older newspapers, clippings of her own, published works, her girl works, placed around her. The first part of the poem she has been working on has been scribbled out, multiple retries staring at her. *Being a woman is as if you are a work horse or a circus freak*, is on the page. *I drag on, carrying you behind me.* She frowns and scratches it out. Then looks at the other line and scratches that out too.

"Megatron: no inspiration?" asks Soundwave, sitting up on his mattress, almost startling her.

She looks over at him, at his silhouette shaking against the wall as the small flame trembles. Jazz is curled up against him, arm wrapped around his lap, face pressed into his side. Orange and golds reflect in Soundwave's eyes as he watches her, keeping unwavering eye contact.

She props her head up on her palm. "Something like that, yes," she answers, tired. She forces herself not to yawn.

"Soundwave: wants to hear poem," he suggests.

Jazz stirs, and Soundwave immediately turns his attention to him.

She smiles as she watches this, the pure affection pouring out of him. Soundwave thinks Jazz is beautiful, perfect, she can tell. She has known him longer than she has known herself. He may not be emotional in face or tone or body motions, but she can see everything in his eyes, in the way he holds himself, in the way he cares for Jazz and how he cares for her. She isn't sure she's ever known anybody so caring.

(She thinks about the stray cat in the alley way, how it followed him around, slinking between his long legs as he walked. She thinks about him bringing it tuna and tries to convince it to walk up the steps to their apartment.)

She shrugs, finding a non-scribbled out verse to read. "All you think I know how to do is how to cry, all you think about is hystericals."

There is a silence as Soundwave thinks. "Soundwave: wonders what pen name poem will be under."

Will she write it as herself or as a boy? A woman or a factory worker? How many of these things can be exclusive? Was it the factory that made her a woman? Or was she always a woman, always from the day she was born? Was she a little girl in the orphanage? Or did the boy inside her die and be replaced by the girl she is? How much of herself can she put into her published works before she becomes both a woman and factory worker? How much of her girl poems can be about riches and ladies and romantic love before people realize she has none of that?

She shrugs again. Maybe she should go to sleep before Soundwave's half-broken watch hits five and she has to pull her boy clothes over herself, return into her false skin, her mask. She'll become somebody else, a stranger living in her body—even if she doesn't even feel like it really is her body—her becoming a stranger.

She doesn't think she ever was a boy. Not really, anyway. She has always been a girl, always been Megatron and girl and woman and she and her and she has never been anybody else. Just like she's always been poor, always been a factory worker. She has always been a girl, then young woman, now full woman.

Soundwave is a boy, Jazz is a boy, her employer is a boy, the fourteen year old that is in the shift after her is a boy. She is a girl in a boy world, but isn't that every girl anyways?

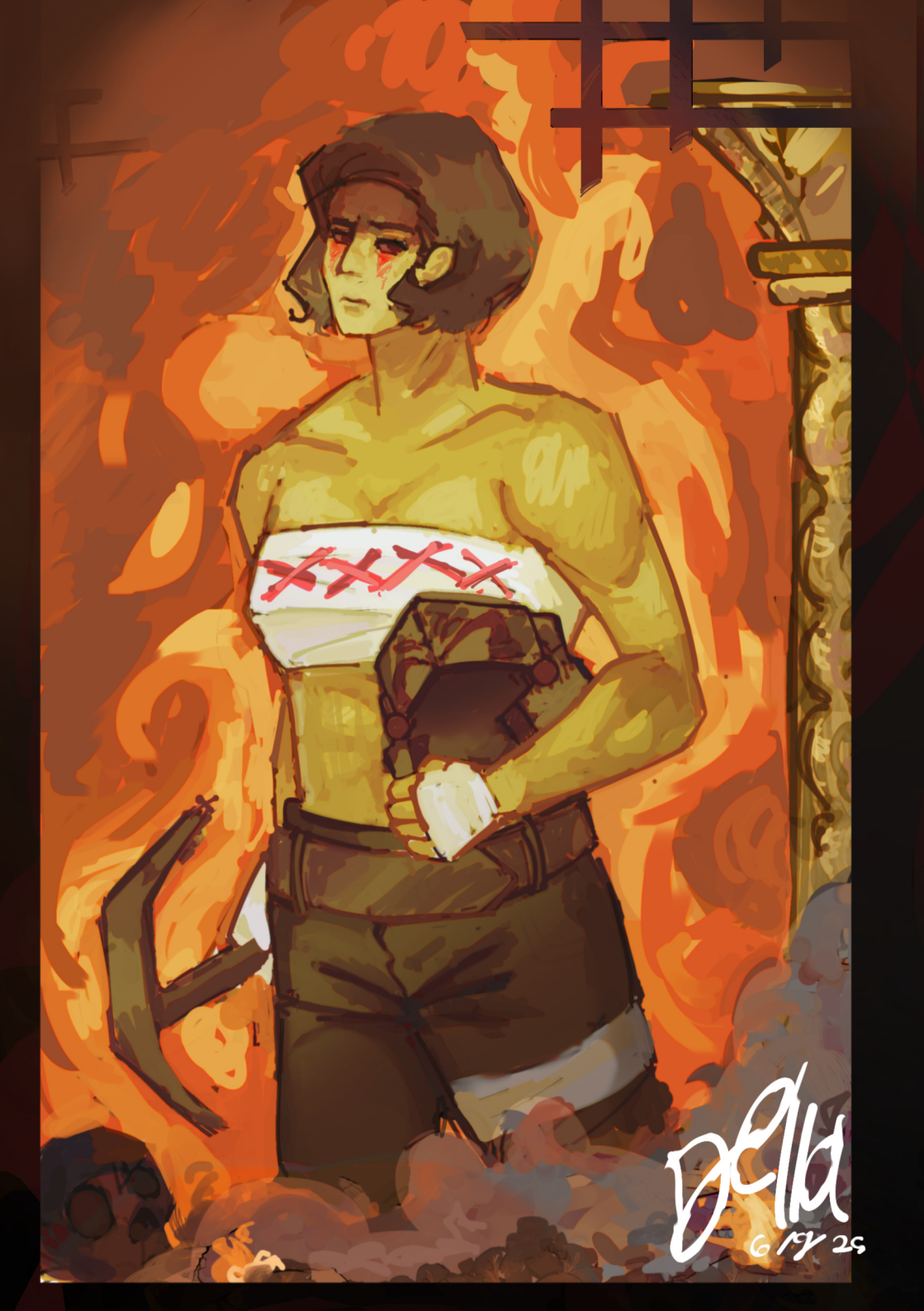
How much of her life has she changed by being a girl? How much of her life would have changed if she was born a girl? Would she have a husband? Children? Would she marry rich? Be a good wife and look after the home? Would she have a servant? Would she still be friends with Soundwave? With Jazz? Would she still be a poet, still writing in the newspaper?

Life of The Female Work Horse, she writes at the very top of the page, above all of the scratched out lines, tapping her pencil against the paper.

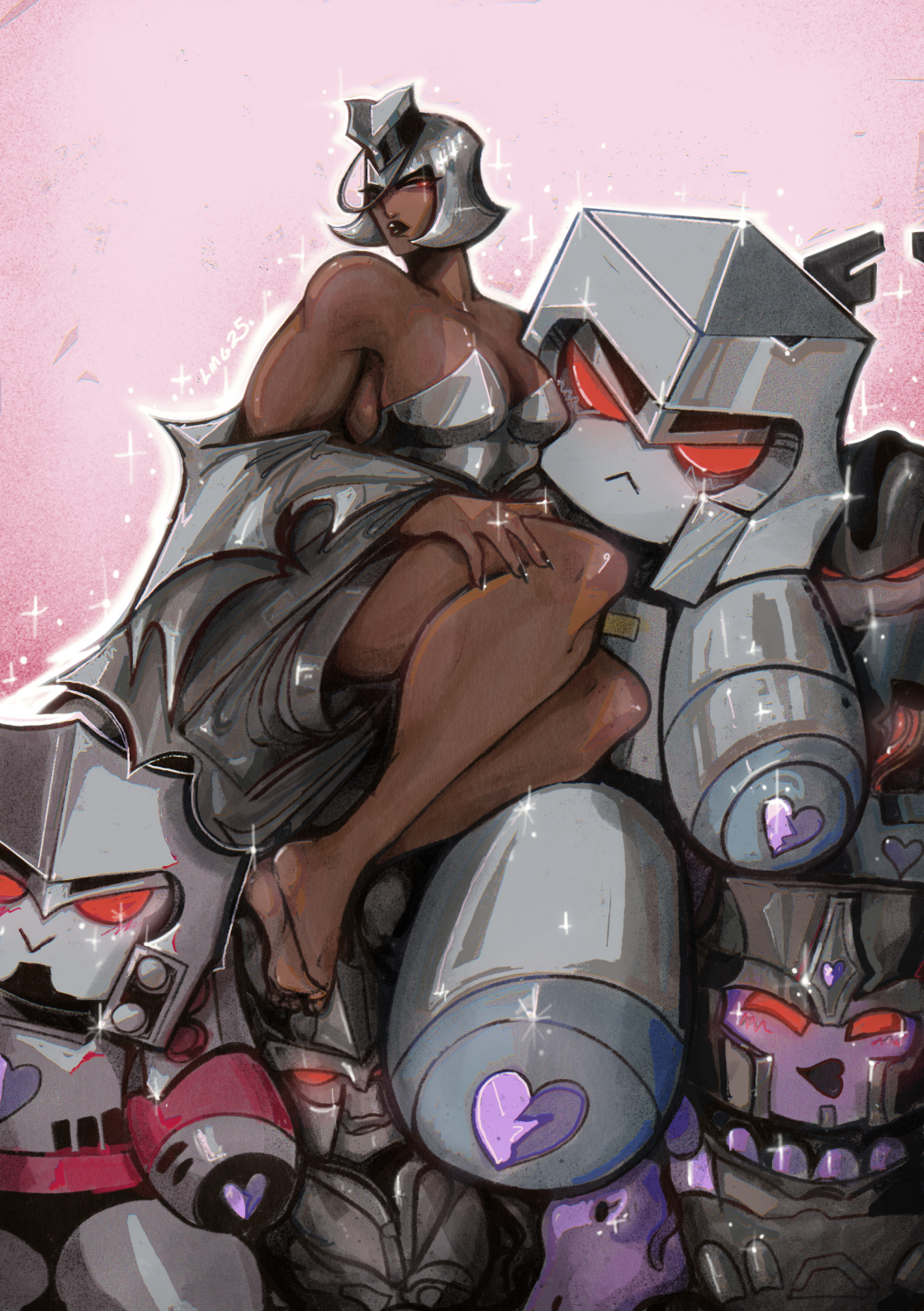
I've always been honest and I have never bucked you off and I have never broken the bit. She doesn't like it very much, but she doesn't erase it. *I know how your whip tastes, I know how your hate feels.*

She wonders if her girlhood is defined by politics. She wonders if her words are a double-edged sword, both girl and worker. She wonders if the newspaper will change the words, like they do with his boy poems, as women, as respectful women are not supposed to care about work and factories and pain and suffering. Women are supposed to be above these things, above it all, like queens and princesses. Women are only supposed to bow at the feet of their men and not think too much and not do anything without the approval of their boy sons and boy fathers. She wonders what she will become.

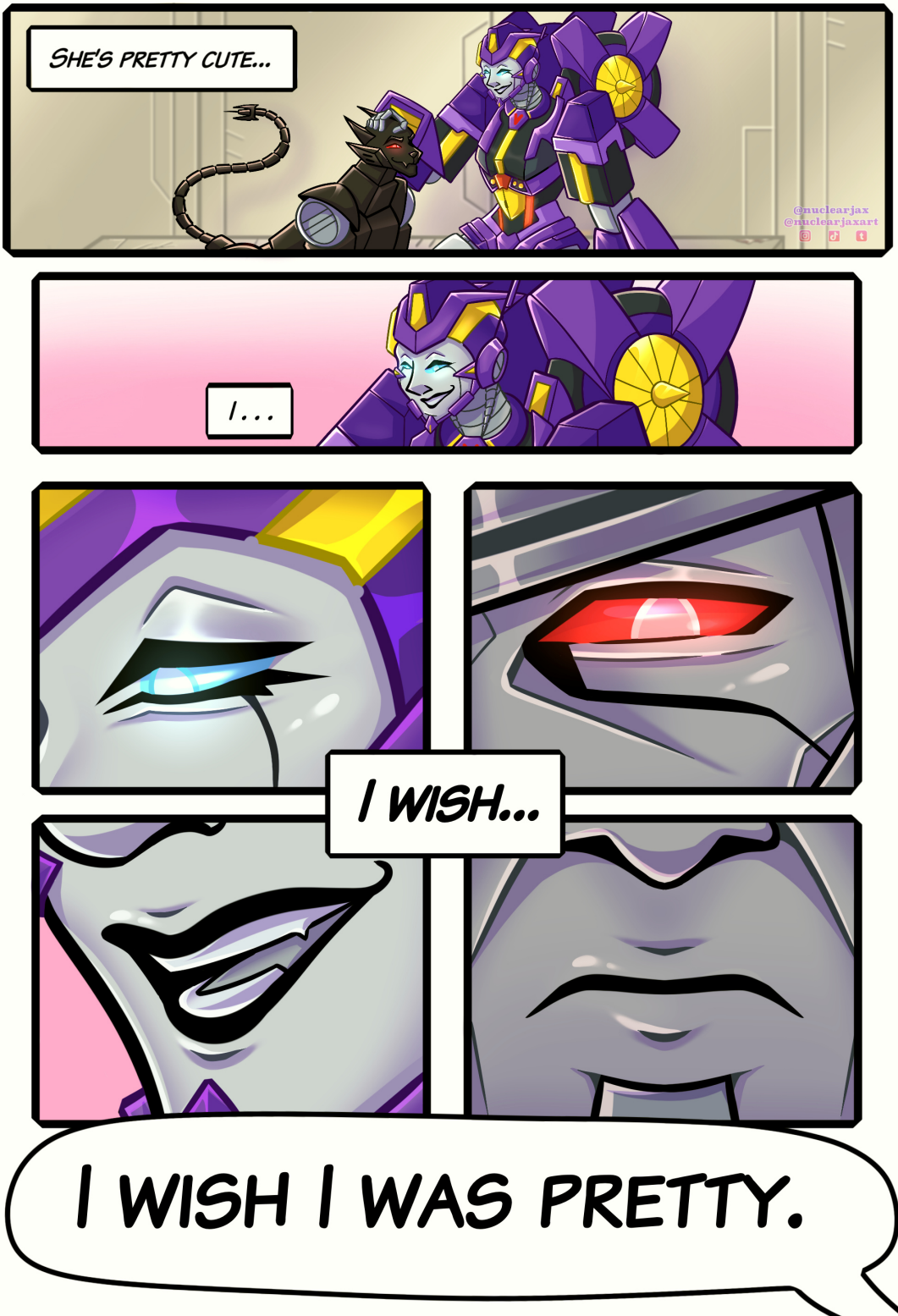
Megatron lays her arms over her notebook and puts her head into the nest of limbs. Her bare arms are cold against her cheek, but she finds herself not caring.

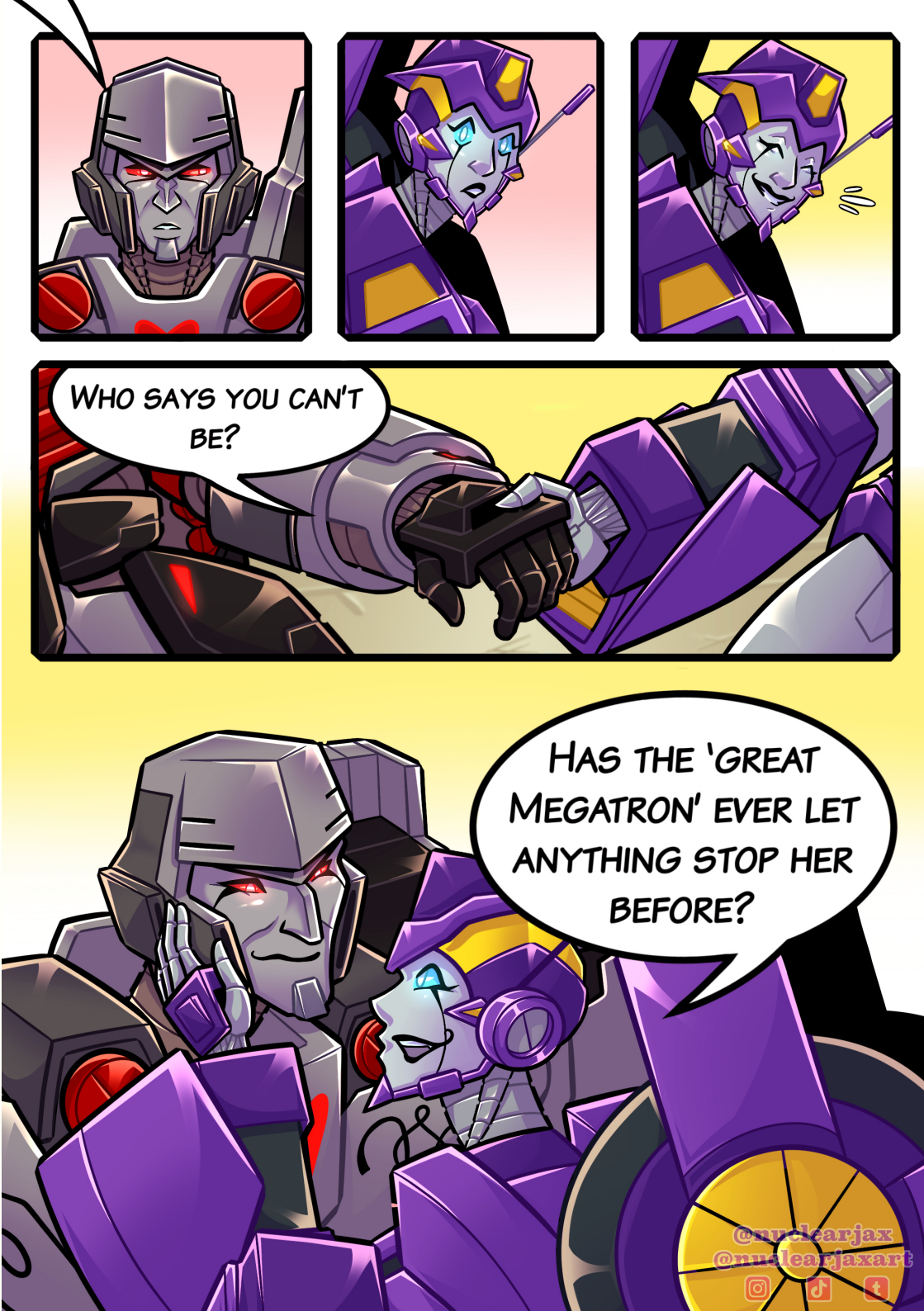

Della
6/17/25

ISN'T IT STRANGE
TO CREATE SOMETHING
THAT HATES YOU


LM625

SHE'S PRETTY.
A SHAME, SHE'S PRETTY.
@nuclearjax
@nuclearjaxart
SHE'S SO PRETTY.
FEMME'S ARE PRETTIER.


SHE'S PRETTY CUTE...
@nuclearjax
@nuclearjaxart
I...
I WISH...
I WISH I WAS PRETTY.


WHO SAYS YOU CAN'T BE?
HAS THE 'GREAT MEGATRON' EVER LET ANYTHING STOP HER BEFORE?
@nuclearjax
@nuclearjaxart

STELLAR EVOLUTION

BY REBOOT

"You're overthinking it," Rodimus said.

Megatron made a face. "I haven't told you any of what I'm thinking."

This was mostly true; he'd been keeping his strange feelings to himself. It started as a subtle bud, easily pushed aside for more pressing matters, but lately it had grown into a nagging feeling in his chest. It took a long time for him to barely acknowledge it and even longer for him to start putting in the effort of sorting through it. Though, how he would sort through any of it without knowing where to start was something he had not quite figured out yet. Still, this was an internal battle. How Rodimus had realized his plight, he had no clue.

"No seriously, you're overthinking it." Rodimus leaned against the wall of the ship. "I'm not saying to dive right in, but why think when you can test it out? Dip your pedes in the water a little. We could practice using different words for you if you want. Worked for me."

He looked at him curiously. "It did?"

"Oh yeah!" He grinned. "The moment I heard my friends say it, I knew it was right. Though, I wouldn't expect it to work as easy for you. Limiting your rounds of, what, self examination? Limiting that would help you. Do, not think."

"I don't think that's true."

Rodimus groaned. "Okay, maybe I didn't word it the best, but you know what I'm saying! If you don't explore you'll stay stuck in your head." He poked Megatron's helm, laughing a little when his hand was pushed away. "Do you always have to look so judgmental? I'm helping you! Here, I can be your bot. You don't have to tell anyone else. Tell me what you want and we can run through it right now."

Megatron shook his head. "No, no. Not right now." He hesitated. "I may take you up on that offer another time." He did not fully trust Rodimus, but if he was experienced in this area of life and offering, maybe it would be

foolish not to take him up on it. As long as he could keep his mouth shut otherwise. That was the problem.

He gave a double thumbs up. “Next time then. Now you can think about it. Words. Names, maybe, do you need a new name?”

“No, no names. Just… the other things.”

“The other things.”

“Yes.”

Many expressions flashed across Rodimus’ face as he tried not to laugh. He bit his lip as he nodded repeatedly. Sure, the other things. Whatever that meant.

Rodimus swore over and over that he never said anything. However, that did not stop Megatron’s shipmates from pestering him with questions before he had even realized word was beginning to spread. Questions about how long he’d thought that way, when he was going to tell them, what he was going to do about it, who would do what to his frame. The excitement over this novel discovery overrode any answer he gave. He found himself repeating his answers moments after the words left his mouth. Frustration boiled within him. He kept it contained until his next conversation with Rodimus, promising to never tell him anything ever again. Perhaps whoever had started the rumors overheard this conversation as well, because suddenly, Megatron found himself only having to answer questions once or twice, and the topic of what would happen to his frame was dropped entirely.

The idea of a new name still seemed to be a hot topic. Ideas passed between bots over drinks as if it were any other casual conversation. A voting board was started one particularly late night; Megatronia, Megan, Mauditron, the especially awful DeeDee. Swerve seemed particularly attached to the idea of Megaempress. He wasn’t interested in being called anything other than his actual name, but he had to admit he thought about that one sometimes. It fed his ego in a nice way. Of course, that would be obvious to anyone and everyone, so it was out of the question. If it was something he even wanted to begin with.

Unfortunately, the buzz seemed to be morphing into action. Unwanted

help was thrust upon him. Some of it was appreciated; swapping between 'he' and 'she' to ease the change and test the waters, Velocity and Rung separately offering to talk when he was ready. Most of it was something else entirely. Ultra Magnus gave him a datapad with an article he had found. Blaster found music that she may find "relatable". Magnus gave her another datapad. There was a themed party at Swerve's, full of decorations that couldn't have been sitting around gathering dust somewhere.

Magnus had given him enough datapads to create two uneven stacks that sat untouched upon her desk.

He dreaded looking at them. What he had read had been helpful, but he'd grown to hesitate picking them up, unable to read more than a few words when he managed it. Now his hands had begun to only hover above them, not close enough to touch. A waste.

After some time, seeing the jumble of information gave her an idea.

'You flare,

You flicker'

'A burst of light from a dying star'

'A cold nip of space'

'Plating marred by cycles

Repairs losing their-'

'A spark

Shapes a frame

No matter how man-'

The words were erased again. This was how she had always been able to articulate what she didn't understand. Poetry, essays. Where were the words for this? Were they buried in the tower of datapads? Were they waiting to be sanitized through the mouth of a psychiatrist? Perhaps her spark was simply giving a hint of what she could have been had she known millions of years ago. A final note before what inevitably awaited her.

Megatron continued trying to write her feelings. Nothing came to him. If she wrote enough, a way to describe what was building inside of him clearly and concisely would come to him. He only needed time. He needed to be patient. Or, that was what he told himself. The longer it took, the more the confusion grew, twisting into something he was becoming forced to admit may be shame.

He wondered what Rodimus would do and physically cringed. Trying to imitate Rodimus, how low he had fallen! He had been told he was overthinking it before he had truly begun to think. How he was meant to decipher any of this without mulling it over was beyond him. Rodimus must have been lying when he said he knew immediately. Of course he'd want to make it look like it had been easy for him. He hadn't factored in his ego. Megatron knew in his spark the situation was more complicated than that, but thinking of it like this made his frustration feel more justified.

No matter how long he sat, the answer did not come to him.

Megatron wasn't sure what to make of being invited to movie night. He didn't even know what they were watching. He knew this would be related to his predicament somehow. It seemed like nearly everything was. He appreciated Rodimus' regular nonsense more than ever because at least this very tender part of himself wasn't being shown off to the world.

Still, he came. He came and settled into an acceptable spot, and when she was offered a rust stick, she accepted.

To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar was quite the title. As the opening sequence played, watching the humans put on their clothes, their makeup, she wondered if this is what the others thought of her. Thought this was what she wanted. And as the movie went on, she wondered, did she want this? There was a trio. At least they had each other. As much as Rodimus understood, there was also plenty he didn't. She knew that much without having to have a deeper conversation. Her emotions went up and down. There was understanding and yearning, and then complete confusion, only half of which was because of how odd humans were. She knew she wanted them to do well. She knew she wanted Vida to have everything she wanted. Everything he could not

have.

The gossip reminded her of her shipmates. He could place them all in different parts of the town if he tried. The room laughed when all the ladies got new brightly colored outfits. Murmurs of trying to do the same thing accompanied the giggles. He knew it wouldn't take long for loud pulsing music to fill the halls, the smell of new paint wafting around. It was nauseating. Maybe the movie was nauseating. Watching the town stand up for them, watching Vida be accepted, it hurt. His spark *hurt*. A need to leave the room grew stronger and stronger, and once the movie ended, he hurried out before anyone could attempt to speak to him.

When Megatron got to his habsuite, he found a nice spot to sit against the wall. As dramatic as he felt, the world seemed to be crashing down on him. It was far too overwhelming to be worth figuring out. The whole ship was ready to explore something before he'd taken any steps. The audacity of it baffled him. He could recognize the potential kindness in their actions but it did nothing but pain him. He wished he'd been able to hide himself. Better yet, he wished he'd shut down Rodimus the moment he brought it up. Life before was far easier than it was now. He could live with an odd feeling. Confronting it had only made it worse.

After some time, he finally stood up. The crushing weight of this prospective new self had lightened. Through the window, he could see hundreds of thousands of stars. The purple swirls of space stared back at him. His favorite color. The beauty moved slowly, never wavering. Megatron's optics lingered.

"You're doing too much." Ravage's voice broke him from his trance.

Megatron kept his eyes on the stars. "I believe I've been quite stagnant, actually."

"You care too much about what they think. You're Megatron. When have you cared about what they think?" When there was no response, she continued, "I assume you've tried writing your thoughts already."

Megatron did not answer this time, and Ravage let the conversation fall to silence. She sat patiently.

"I should have spoken to Starscream about it."

"No, you shouldn't have."

"No, I shouldn't have."

The stars looked a little brighter. Megatron spotted new ones, their light previously too dull to notice. She made note of them. The idea that she was one of those stars, hiding away until it was their time, crossed her mind. How cliche. Her expression softened.

"I like how it feels," she began quietly, "when they call me that. She. It feels foolish for such things to matter, especially now, after everything. Anything can matter to anyone, but I didn't think something like that could matter to me." She felt Ravage walk closer to her. She kept her optics on the stars. She felt more confident in her words. "I don't want to answer their questions. I don't want to try and put my feelings into words. I just want to be."

Ravage sat next to her. "Then be," she said.

Finally, Megatron looked down at her old friend and smiled. "You make it sound easy."

Ravage scoffed. "You like to make everything difficult."

She couldn't argue with that. Still, she was going to put up a bit of a fight. "Change is never easy."

"I don't think you're really changing." Ravage shook her head at Megatron's surprise. "You're only swapping out one word for another, aren't you? That's not much of a change. Letting go just isn't easy for you."

Oh.

That was certainly a way of putting it.

Megatron turned back to the window. She wasn't sure she agreed with Ravage, or if she actually meant what she said versus simply trying to break Megatron out of a potential second spiral, but it was an interesting idea. Perhaps she could ponder that instead.

The neverending sky stood still before them. Letting go of who she thought she was, or who she thought she had to be. Was that what it was? It was certainly a possibility. All the doors were already open for her, if she was only willing to walk through them.

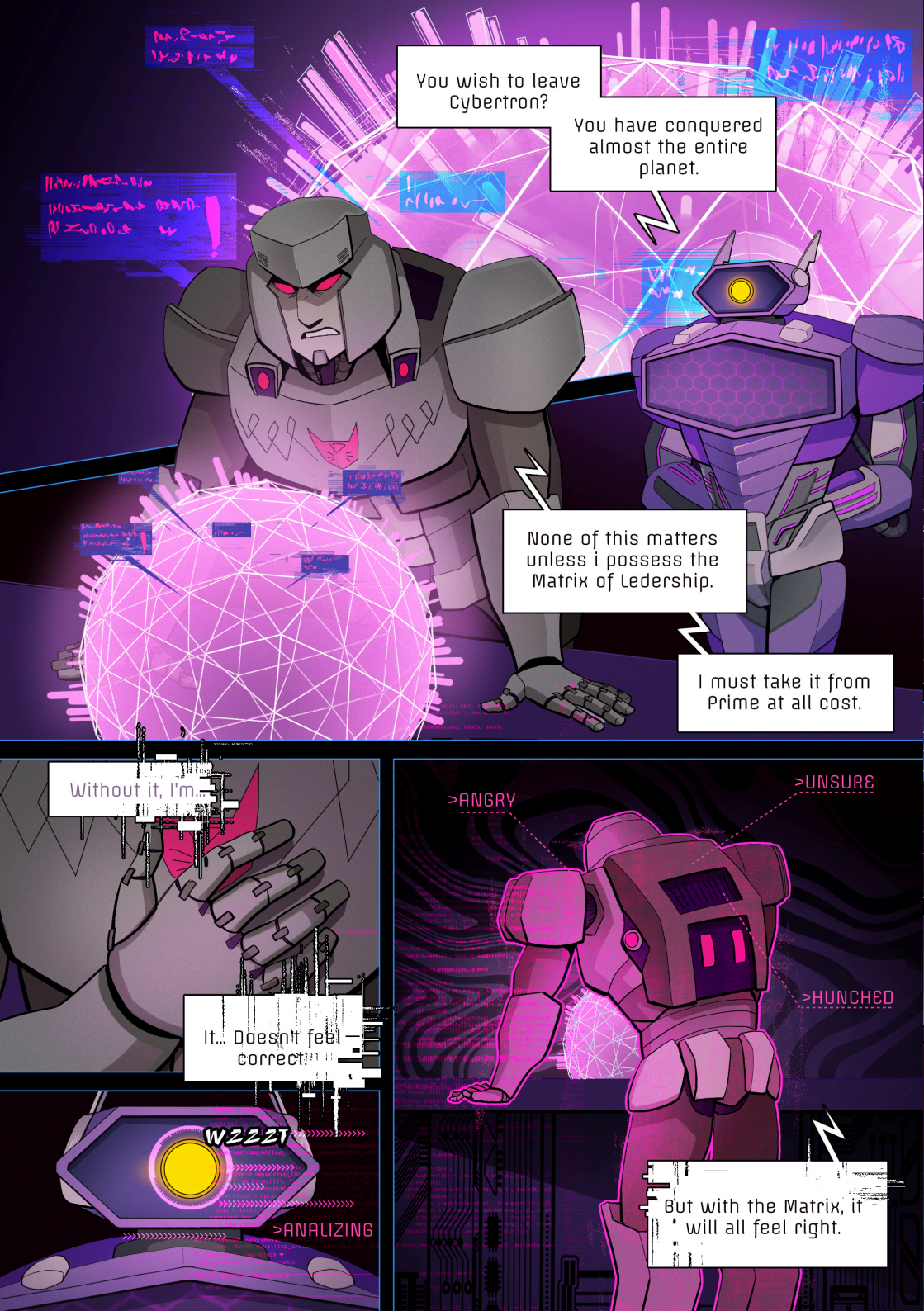
That was a step for another night.

For now, she could stay with Ravage. The two of them living.

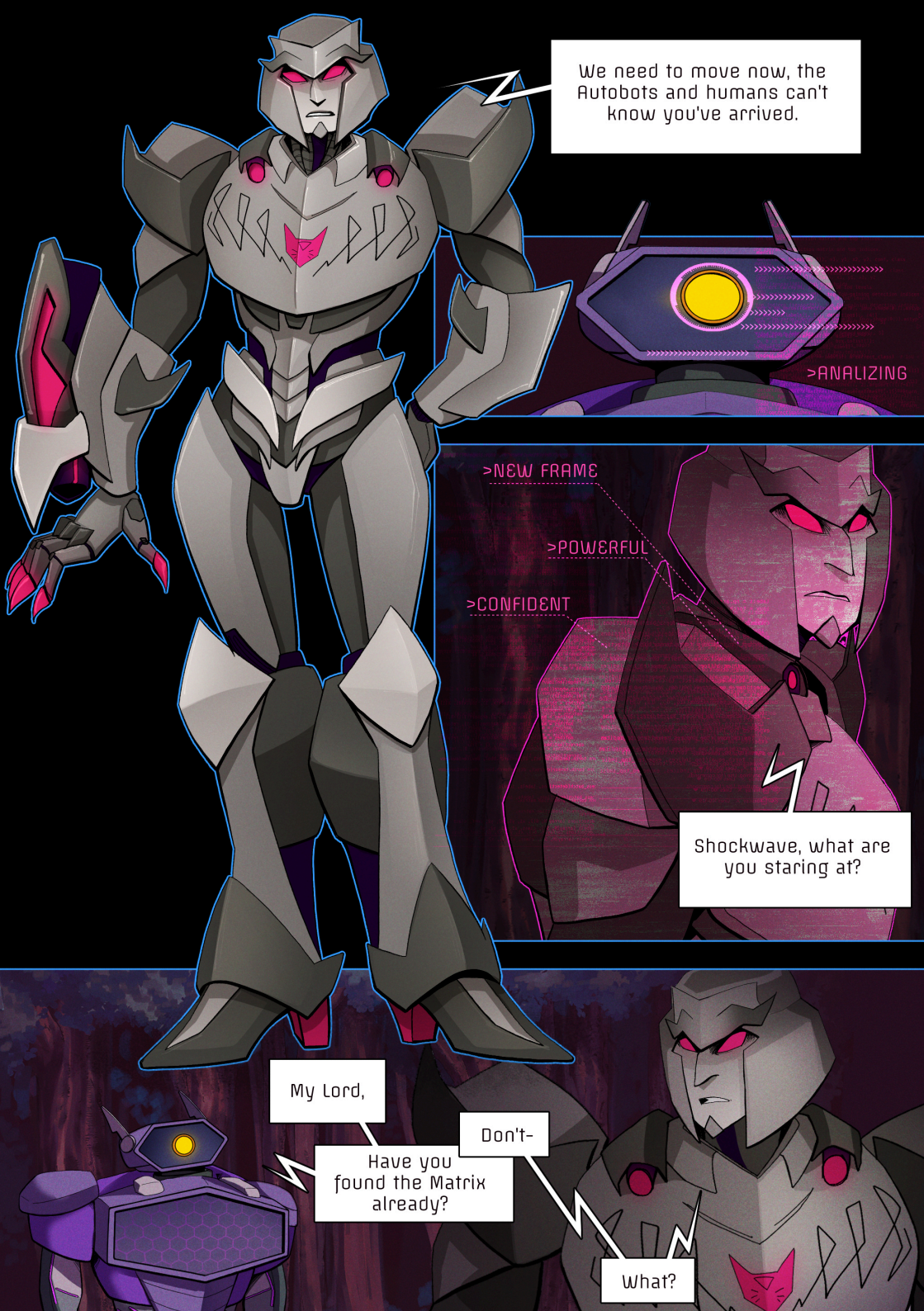
That was enough.

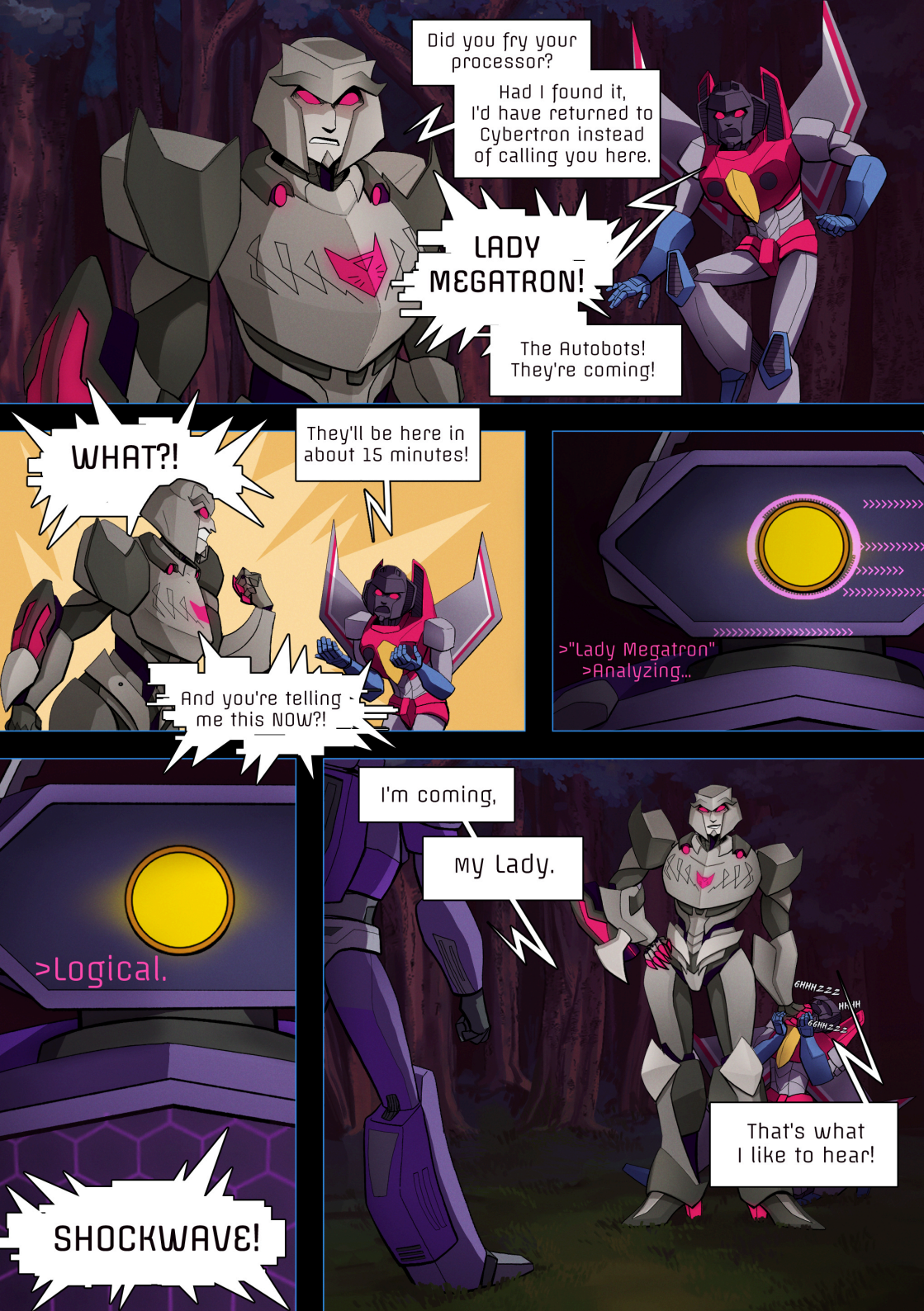
I think I'm gonna get this.
SHOPPING LIST
New Clothes
Leather Jacket
-Bandages
-Boots
-Spices
-Backpack
-Gun cleaner
ITEM
IT
I like it. You look good. You look like you.

TRANS
TIMES
Mystic Fox Designs


You wish to leave Cybertron?
You have conquered almost the entire planet.
None of this matters unless i possess the Matrix of Ledership.
I must take it from Prime at all cost.
Without it, I'm...
It... Doesn't feel — correct.
WZZZT
>ANALIZING
>ANGRY
>UNSURE
>HUNCHED
But with the Matrix, it will all feel right.

I need you to stay on Cybertron and keep everything under control.
Understood.
MILLENIA LATER, EARTH.
73 Tarnów
Brnik
BWOOOM
Finally. You had us waiting.


We need to move now, the Autobots and humans can't know you've arrived.
>ANALIZING
>NEW FRAME
>POWERFUL
>CONFIDENT
Shockwave, what are you staring at?
My Lord,
Have you found the Matrix already?
Don't-
What?


Did you fry your processor?
Had I found it, I'd have returned to Cybertron instead of calling you here.
LADY MEGATRON!
The Autobots! They're coming!
WHAT?!
They'll be here in about 15 minutes!
And you're telling me this NOW?!
>"Lady Megatron"
>Analyzing...
>Logical.
SHOCKWAVE!
I'm coming,
My Lady.
GHHHZZZ
HHHH
GGHHZZZ
That's what I like to hear!

THE TEAM!

MODERATORS

PAUL

PRINCEPAUL
PRINCE_PAUL

PUZZLES

OBJECTIONABLEPUZZLES

CONTRIBUTORS

AECHO

AECHOLAPIS

AVOIDGHOST

AVOIDGHOST

BATMECH

BATMECH5

BEE

KELL_ERAMIS
GOLDBUG

BENEDICCIA

BENEDICCIA

BREAKDOWN

MENASORS

BUNGERMEAL

BUNGERMEAL

THEN SHE ROARED

CF8WRK4U-US

BG030637@GMAIL.COM
CF8WRK4U-US
SEA-FATE

CLAIRE

ECTONURITEZ

DELIA

LEPETITDIAJENG

EKKO

EKKOKLO

ENUSZKA

ENUSZKA
TROKOPOTAKA

HANABY

HANABY-3
HANABY_3

COMMERCE, PRUDENCE, INDUSTRY

HARDING

MAINENORTH

KAX M.XG

MECHAXGEAREDO
KAONSHEAD
MECHAXGEARED

KNIGHT

WHITETAILEDRABBIT
WEIRDRABBIT96

LENA/RAVEN

DRACULINARAVEN
RAVENDRACULINA
RAVENBERB

MECHAGOENNA

MECHAGOENNA
HAPPYPROGRESSDAY

MYSTICFOXDESIGNS

MYSTICFOXDESIGNS

NUCLEARJAX

NUCLEARJAX
NUCLEARJACKS

STELLAR EVOLU-TION

REBOOT

STROBEREBOOT

ROOTBEERRAT

ROOTBEERRAT1
MYLEGACYISTARNISHED

SPARKLINGSONG

SPARKLINGSONG
2SPARKLINGSONG

STARSCREAM

5STARSCREAM

XEON

HOTPAWFFEE

YUNISKETCH

YUNISKETCH
MELATONIN-MAGUS

PROMO ART

BY PAUL

BY PUZZLES
+PAUL

Too late, puny Autobots!
BY BENEDICCIA
BY PUZZLES

CLOCKING OUT...

MEGATRON

071-980

OUTPOST C-12

IN FEB 14 2025

OUT OCT 17 2025

GLORY TO THE COUNCIL

THANK YOU FOR READING!